The Commonweal

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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PUBLIC OPINION AND THE PRESS

THE PART played by the press in the 1936 campaign should focus attention upon the larger subject of the relation of the press to the formation and guidance (or at least the truthful expression) of public opinion. It is a very complicated problem, not only in itself, but also because its consideration must be accompanied by a consideration of the part played by the radio, both in the campaign, and also in its relation to public opinion in general. These two great agencies, the press and the radio, partly cooperate, and partly compete, as agencies of public opinion. The future of democratic processes of government is deeply involved in the problems presented by the results of the recent campaign.

One thing seems quite certain as regards newspaper influence, namely, that it has suffered a vast decline. Something like 80 percent of the daily newspapers of the country threw all the supposed weight not only of their editorial utterances, but, to a large degree, of their news columns as well, against the Roosevelt administration quite vainly. In fact, quite ignominiously. That these papers had every right to oppose an administration which the owners of these papers believed to be injurious to the interests of the nation, is of course undeniable. Such a course was, in principle, not only their right but their duty as well. Theoretically, the exercise of that duty was the fulfilment of the liberty of the press, which liberty is absolutely essential for the preservation of the wider liberties of a democratic people. But this cannot be asserted so confidently in the case of those many newspapers which not only opposed the administration editorially but which also expressed their opposition by the way in which they manipulated their news reports. Several of the great chains of papers, and many of the largest and most powerful individual papers, were guilty of this course. The thing became a notorious scandal. Fortu-

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nately, it was perceived not only by journalists, but by great masses of the general public. In several cities there were public demonstrations of anger and resentment. And although, unfortunately, it is not an established habit of the daily press to discuss its own ethical problems frankly, nevertheless a number of the leading dalies have published articles, or letters, in which some of these problems have been stated.

Naturally, some of the papers have been more interested in pointing out the facts, or the suppositions, which seem to indicate the ineffectiveness of the radio than they have been in questioning the effectiveness of the press. According to the view of such papers, the radio failed conspicuously to justify its large use, and the vast sums of money expended for that use. All the minor parties, and the Republican party, employed the radio extensively and expensively, and made no headway at all against the Roosevelt tide, indeed they lost ground badly. Father Coughlin's case was particularly striking. On the other hand, the radio talks by the President seem to have been extraordinarily effective; but that, too, may be an illusion. What Americans thought themselves, on the basis of their own observations of the state of the nation, and the conditions of their neighbors, and of their own hopes and fears for the future obviously counted for more with them than the contradictory floods of radio oratory. It may be that the failure of the radio has a very simple explanation, namely, that it was grossly overplayed. Millions of people were wearied, not interested, or stimulated, by the unceasing Niagara of sound, so much of it lacking all sense. It is to be hoped that a survey of the problem will be made, so that in the future the radio will not be used so badly. For it remains potentially so useful and effective an instrument of public opinion that every effort should be made to guard against its impairment and abuse.

Returning to the subject of the press, it seems to us that special attention should be given to the danger, so vividly illustrated during the presidential campaign, of the power of the press becoming concentrated in too few hands. Moreover, this control is obviously exercised by men who are far more concerned with business and financial interests than with editorial ethics, and the moral responsibilities of the press to the public. The whole theory of the usefulness of the press rests upon the assumption that its power should primarily be employed by independent, responsible editors and writers, and that its business direction will follow its editorial policy, striving to make profits out of sales and advertising first of all in order to support its editorial mission, and not primarily as a business enterprise. That was the conception of journalism which once generally prevailed in this republic, and which made American journalism glorious. But that conception no longer corresponds to the realities of the situation. Business interests, as such, have gradually taken a control which is well-nigh absolute, and which in far too many cases is brutally and callously contemptuous of the ethics of journalism. Editors and writers have become, to a large and wholly dangerous degree, the mere hired voices of their plutocratic employers. The balance that once was held fairly even between the editorial and the business departments of the press has come down heavily on the side of the business office. This does not, of course, mean that the business side of journalism invariably or necessarily is detrimental to the best interests of the public, but it does mean that the liberty and energy of newspaper editors and writers are restricted and enfeebled to a degree that threatens to be a catastrophe to the liberties of the nation.

Perhaps the growth of organization among the editors and writers will help to redress their situation. Perhaps there will appear newspapers owned and controlled by foundations, or groups of citizens, for the purpose of maintaining the ethical purposes of journalism. Many powerful journals, fortunately, still strive to uphold the true American conception. They should take the lead in promoting discussion of a subject which is of the highest importance for the future of our people.

Week by Week

MR. ROOSEVELT'S second administration opened with a proclamation of good feeling so emphatic that one is reminded of the mood which animated the country back in '33. A sincere desire to bury many hatchets was present on both sides. Underlying economic struggles did not disappear, to be sure; and a maritime strike of real importance as well as certain indications that this or that great industry was clearing the decks for action made it evident that the approaching four years will be devoted to sterner tasks than finding new names for new roses. Among the impressive documents of the week was Father Coughlin's radio farewell. It was an interesting and in part a moving speech; and we who have now and then differed with him wish to acknowledge that with Americans of goodwill generally we feel an obligation to forget what has seemed distasteful in Father Coughlin's methods and wrong in his doctrine in order that we may better remember the words of hope and instruction which many, very many, received from him in dark days close to the season of despair. While he was the leader of a political movement, Father Coughlin had to expect hostility from those who believed his program a national danger. If

The Trend of Events

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he retains in the priestly mission the zeal of one aware of Christian social teaching, there will be none who does not wish him well. The United States is now more than ever a two-party country. That will not always be the case. But while it is, our duty and opportunity surely are to work for human betterment inside the majority or minority group, to the best of our abilities. Perhaps the most immediate civic task is to prevent an outright cleavage between "conservative" and "reactionary." As yet the Democrats have no monopoly on decent liberalism, and the Republicans are not minus progressive ambitions. We hope this will remain permanently true of both.

MR. EDEN'S "olive branch" speech seems to have expressed correctly the hope as well as the determination of the British people. It is desirable that peace should reign everywhere, but there are some estimates of its value that seem much too high. Britain cannot afford to take sides in any debate between antagonistic views of society; but it must and will defend matters of vital import to the empire. These remarks by a statesman now sufficiently seasoned to be a responsible mouthpiece of his government's policy seem to indicate that Armageddon may be nearer than we have usually imagined. For during years gone by, Englishmen were groggy with the sensation of easy prosperity which came after years of difficulty, and refused to take very seriously the various rumors of catastrophe that were noised abroad. Much has happened recently to arouse them. Present indications are that the rearmament program under way will increase rather than diminish the influence of the conservative party; and King Edward's status is, despite world-wide erotic publicity, extraordinarily secure. Even more important is the decision to brook no interference from would-be autocrats of whatever persuasion. For this means that the average man has again taken stock of his way of life and is, for all his shortcomings, firmly resolved to defend it. This revival of English ability to come to a decision is noteworthy, especially because it is usually born of danger.

The Drums Begin to Roll

THAT the danger is very real nobody will doubt. A new German penal code and "four-year plan" signify that the consolidation of the Fatherland for war is rapidly reaching a climax. Nothing remains of the Nazi social revolution properly so called. But it is the merit of Hitler and his lieutenants to have cowed or coaxed Germans into being cogs of a war machine of startling potential efficiency. Labor, industry and foodstuff production are welded into an all-embracing unit, protest against which means death. Never before in the history of mankind has there been any such totalitarian mobilization of human beings and human wealth for conquest. The Hitler-Schacht-Blomberg cabal has within three years far outdone all that has been attempted by Mussolini. Nevertheless one may cheerfully admit that Il Duce has done a good mobilization job, in view of the temperament, resources and situation of his country. What is all this preparation for? However much of it may be attributed to desire for prestige at home, these facts seem to remain: Mussolini will be satisfied with what he has won, provided Britain makes it possible for him to exploit it; but Germany is bound sooner or later to seek expansion in Europe. At first the aim will be directed at a fairly small target—possibly Danzig and the Polish corridor. When that moment comes, and it is coming rapidly, Europe will face the gravest situation it has confronted since the summer of 1914.

THE VOTERS decided that the most important divisions in the next Congress will not be by party. The divisions are likely to be much more according to political belief than the party system regularly supplied. For long years the superficial distinctions between the Republicans and Democrats, and the shallow reasons for controversy in the Legislature were deplored. Congressmen were derided for making their decisions from a completely "political" viewpoint. The number of party friends and dependents they could make in their electoral districts was supposed to be their standard in judging anything. The overwhelming majority now goes to Washington with such enormous party support back home that its members will be almost forced to think of other things, political and economic theory included. It will likely be a more "sincere" Congress and it will certainly be a more difficult one. The bloc system sure to come is by no means new in Washington, but it will be so much more developed in the Seventy-fifth Congress that it will perhaps seem like new. The "Farm Bloc" of the Harding and early Coolidge days has so far been our most powerful and crystallized bloc, but that will probably not have a renaissance. More likely to be powerful are a Progressive, rather social democratic bloc, a regional bloc, not necessarily Southern but partial to states' rights, a finance bloc on the alert against too graduated taxes and too great checks on bigness in business, and an indeterminable number of others. Indeed, the uncertainty of the line-up must be worrying political leaders considerably. We seem due for more statesmanship and less politics, and the chances are that most Americans won't particularly like statesmanship when they get it. When you have sincere and thoughtful divisions, it's hard to get unity or anything else.

Congress Renewed

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The Impossible Communists

WE ARE quite prepared to believe that some Communists are interesting people, violently enamored of social justice and dedicated to pacifism of the most unadulterated kind. But as time goes on, few groups appear so utterly vapid and destructive of all values, even their own. Underground information from Germany stresses the fact that what remains of the movement there is in complete disarray, unable to escape from the shock of the Stalin-Trotsky controversy and yet pathetically dependent upon "orders from Moscow." The story of Communist action during the present Spanish revolution is already clear enough. The group made unity of the Republican defense impossible, and gratified their desires for violence and arrant nonsense in the most appalling fashion. One need not credit every atrocity story in order to feel certain that a number of dastardly murders —of persons who had been guaranteed protection by the government—can be attributed to them. There is plenty of available evidence to show that they have aroused the disgust of their own confrères, and that the influence of Moscow was confined to instilling into them some vestiges of common sense. In France the nervousness of the Communists is rendering them impossible from the Popular Front standpoint. If the Blum government falls during the coming months, the blame will clearly be theirs. Some of them may continue to be effective and aggressive revolutionists, but in western countries at least they are demonstrably without temper or intelligence. They lead their followers into hopeless blind alleys and thus undermine, quite without wishing to do so, the very ramparts they are endeavoring to guard.

Vandalism, Heroic Scale

THE VANDAL presents a curious study wherever he operates. The impulse which seizes him differs basically from other impulses producing the same result. Monuments have been chipped away by brainless souvenir-hunters, pictures of nude figures slashed by puritanic fanatics, statues of kings or commanders broken by political or personal enemies, church art defaced by unbalanced haters of religion. But these reversions to a sort of savage animism are intelligible, even when they are wrong, or even when they are pushed to the point of insanity. The mere anarchist of the beautiful, the venerable or the cherished is another thing; and it seems to us that perhaps the strangest instance on record of his operations has just come from Australia. A group of giant Macrozamia palms, locally "burrawangs," including Great-grandfather Peter, said to be the oldest thing alive on earth, was cut down recently by identified spoilers. There was evidently no material purpose in this act of really awesome demolition. The burrawang is known for the opulence of its products—dye, alcohol, pulp, vegetable wool, seed flour—but no effort had been made to secure these things. The great trees were felled about three months ago, and simply allowed to lie untouched. A thing like this shocks the imagination even more, perhaps, than most usual crimes that are more serious; it is partly the loss of the unique tree, perhaps 15,000 years old, which one recognizes to be the property of all earth-born humanity, even those who have never heard of it before—and partly the naked impulse of destruction that shows forth plainly in such a deed. The University of Queensland foresters have made valiant effort at salvage, coating Peter's dismembered trunk against decay and replanting the sections near the stump. But whatever the result of the interesting experiment, the tree itself is no more.

Trouble in Paradise

THE BICYCLE has come back, beyond a doubt, and there has been almost universal pleasure at the fact. The really grave evils of public addiction to fast motor travel are too glaring to be denied; and while no one suggests that the automobile and its high-speed kin be scrapped, the need of balancing the tendency to their use is equally plain. The bicycle has admirably filled that need. It represents travel on wheels, and hence is a practical vehicle for an age attuned to swiftness. It gives its user pleasurable exercise, and it stands next to the old two-horse surrey as a means of enjoying the landscape. It can be used by people within the widest possible age range, and it is small, light, mobile and inexpensive. In a world imperfect by definition, the bicycle has seemed as nearly a perfect expedient, in the circumstances, as the limited human mind could devise. Now, however, comes a report from the Statistical Bureau of the National Safety Council which, under analysis in the columns of the New York *Times,* tends to throw a great deal of doubt upon this optimistic judgment. They estimate that the year 1935 produced 350 deaths as a result of collisions between bicycles and automobiles, and that these casualties represent a much higher figure of persons injured in these accidents —thirty-eight to each death is the average proportion. The deaths in themselves are high compared with almost every other class of vehicular accidents excepting those involving automobiles, and the current year will not decrease them, since the demand for bicycles is steadily increasing. So here, instead of another solution, humanity seems to be presented with another full-fledged problem. It is to be met, of course, by the patient inculcation of safety rules into cyclists—a class who, according to this article, regard themselves, generally, as a race apart when it comes to motor rules.

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NOVEMBER 3 AND JANUARY 20

By CHARLES WILLIS THOMPSON

TWO MONTHS from today the second and definitive Roosevelt administration will begin with the opening of Congress and the President's message informing it of "the state of the country." It is by this second administration that the Roosevelt era will take its place in history, whether through accomplishment or failure. This is not crystal-gazing; it is merely forecasting a future from what has always happened heretofore. "I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided," said Patrick Henry, "and that is the lamp of experience. I know no way of judging of the future but by the past."

Looking into the future with Patrick Henry's "lamp," it is an indubitable misfortune that the top-heavy New Deal majority in Congress was not merely not lessened—as everybody in both camps expected—but was even increased. It is unfortunate by two standards, that of the administration and that of the opposition, and the two together mean the nation. In the first place, any administration needs a strong and intelligent opposition; in the second, any minority is crippled in its usefulness under the American two-party system by that feeling of irresponsibility and leaderlessness which an insignificant representation creates.

This was felt, in this twofold aspect, during Mr. Roosevelt's first or trial administration, but not so much as it must be in his second. The recklessness and lack of coherence which too large a majority always gives is held in check by the fear of consequences. The Democratic majority in the last two Congresses was far too large, but the President nearly always succeeded in controlling it. A reason usually given in such cases is that the patronage can be used as a club in the first administration, but that in the second there is no more patronage to give. A deeper reason is that in the first administration the legislators are in the dark about whether the people approve its conduct and that therefore the safer plan is to assume that they do and go along with it. When the second administration begins, the people's approval is a known fact, and the fear of consequences is either greatly lessened or, as in the case of Cleveland's second term, wholly gone. "The sons of the wild jackass," to use ex-Senator Moses's vivid phrase, are not lacking in any Congress, but when the party majority is not great it is easier to restrain them from slipping the bridle and dashing across the desert after mirages.

The retention of the unnaturally large administration majority was unexpected by anybody, and its actual increase is a phenomenon disagreeable for the administration to contemplate. It goes without saying that this unexpected result is equally disagreeable to the opposition; by which I do not mean merely those Republican partizans who want everything they can get, but the far-sighted who expected defeat this year and counted on building up a constructive force at the Capitol within the next four years. The election didn't leave them much to build it with; and that irresponsibility which characterizes a top-heavy majority characterizes also a skeleton minority. Those who remember the Democratic party in the Bryan years, when it had almost no representation in Congress except from the hopelessly Solid South, can easily envision the kind of demoralization which the Republican party, now placed in a similar position, is likely to show. "What difference does it make?—let's go!" is as likely to be the spirit of a pitiful minority as of a majority drunk with numbers.

How this came about is easy enough to see. Once in the polling booth, the voter is disinclined to take any chances, and knows that if he votes a straight ticket he won't be taking any. To be concrete, it is probable that Senator Barbour of New Jersey would have been reelected if he had not been running on the same ticket with Landon and Knox. Or, to be simpler still, the Rhode Island voter might be strong for the New Deal, but the lower house of the Legislature there has nothing to do with Washington; yet, to make assurance doubly sure, the Rhode Island New Dealer voted straight and defeated local candidates to whom he had no objection whatever. If it had been possible to vote on the question of a top-heavy or average-size majority in Congress, most voters might have preferred the latter and have elected a majority just big enough to make things easy for the President, instead of saddling him with one so enormous as to increase his difficulties.

The size of the President's own majority astonished him as much as it did all the other pre-election guessers, except Mr. Farley. Only two days before election he wrote down his own private estimate, which was that Landon would get 171 electoral votes; Landon got 8. Whatever were Mr. Farley's sources, he of course did not conceal them from his chief, so Mr. Roosevelt knew as much as Mr. Farley did about the inside reports from local workers throughout the Union. With the same information Mr. Farley gave Landon 8 votes. The only possible explanation is that Mr. Roosevelt thought Mr. Farley's asser-

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tions too optimistic. If this was the case with Mr. Roosevelt, who certainly knew all that his lieutenant knew, it is no wonder that journalistic forecasters and lesser political figures, each going on his own, underestimated the probable majority.

At the same time, the size of the victory must not be overestimated; it is not safe. As I write these lines it appears certain that Landon got almost 40 percent of the popular vote. It would not take much of a change in sentiment to make that 40 percent more than 50 percent and reinstall the Republican party in power; and this is the reason why it is dangerous to think and to act as if the Democrats could safely let "the sons of the wild jackass" gallop at will over Capitol Hill.

On this point it is also to be borne in mind that Landon was a weak candidate and merely a stopgap, put up because somebody had to be put up; and that the Republicans cannot safely be relied on to nominate so slight a figure when they believe they have a real chance. If any reader thinks this is easy wisdom after the event, I refer him to my article when Landon was nominated, published in THE COMMONWEAL on June 26. It stated exactly what I am stating now, and it forecast Landon's defeat, paralleling his nomination with the one made by the Democrats in 1904. In both cases, as my statement of them then ran, the minority party was in desperate straits and presented the country with what the article called "a pig in a poke." The invariable reaction of the country to pigs in pokes, all through history, has been a monumental and thunderous rejection of the poke, and, as the article emphasized, this fact demonstrated "the course this campaign will take and the way it is likely to result."

Mr. Landon's effort to introduce himself to the country by speechmaking was foredoomed to failure, if we again take up Patrick Henry's "lamp of experience." In the article on his nomination I gave, as examples, the futile attempts of Alton B. Parker in 1904 and John W. Davis in 1924 to introduce themselves in this way. Davis has since become well enough known, but in 1924, like Parker in 1904, he was nominated for the very reason that he was unknown. In all three cases, whatever the psychological explanation, the speeches of the candidates in attempting to introduce themselves did not fall flat, but did create a surprising amount of hostility against themselves. Toward the close of each of these pig-and-poke campaigns there was noticeable a change from indifference to positive ill-feeling on the part of the electorate; and this may have increased the landslide in each case (all the three defeats were landslides). Plainly, with all these cases to go by, the attempt of an unknown man to "sell" himself by making speeches creates resentment; and there are no other cases to go by, for, as I pointed out in the June article, there are no presentations of unopened pokes except these three in all our history.

In and out of Congress, the Republicans have got to set themselves to readjustment, whether their lot is to be that of a long-time minority like that of the Democrats in the Bryan years or that of a minority on its way to becoming a majority, like the Republicans in the Wilson years. In this try-a-chance campaign they undertook the experiment of turning the party over to new men with no record as leaders. The misnamed "Old Guard" —which merely means men of experience—took their hands off and let the John Hamiltons run everything from roof to gutter. Topeka became the Republican national capital, which was going the 1904 Democratic parallel one better; for the equally representative political center in which the pig-in-poke candidate lived did not become the Democratic national capital. He lived in Esopus, New York; and if Topeka, why not Esopus? But the Democrats of 1904 did not go quite that far in making mistakes; their political capital remained in New York City. Neither did the seasoned Democratic leaders turn over the campaign to bright young apprentices; ex-Senator David B. Hill ran it. To be sure, Parker lost by a landslide, but at least he got more than 8 votes; he got 140. Landon is the only candidate who ever got as few as 8 votes in a fight between two major parties; when Taft got 8 votes it was in a three-party fight. So much for experiments.

Obviously, if the country is to have what it needs, an efficient minority, the job is one of building, and only experienced builders should apply. This does not mean that such bogies as Ogden Mills need be evoked; there are men of both experience and sense at hand, not wearing the bogy domino so oddly jammed over Mills's face. One of them is even in the United States Senate, where Republicans are not plentiful. I am *not* referring, of course, to the nominal Republican leader there, Senator McNary.

Fortunately, there is no doubt that this time it was the country which spoke. Despite the efforts of personalities so strikingly dissimilar as John L. Lewis and the Chicago *Tribune* to make it appear that this was a class war and a class triumph, Roosevelt's vote cut across all classes and all subclasses. No more thoroughly representative vote was ever cast in America. This fact, which is an indubitable one, shows at a glance how false it is to say that "a blank check" was given to Roosevelt or that he is now at liberty to do anything he pleases. With every conceivable interest and class heavily represented in his total, it is impossible to imagine them as all wanting the same things. He has got to guess what the average wish is, and if he guesses wrong, it will take only two years to turn that 40 percent Republican vote into more than 50 percent.

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PROFESSOR GILSON AT HARVARD

By WILLIAM W. GUNN

Professor Gilson's Harvard Tercentenary lecture, with its plea for a measure of philosophical unity as a safeguard against chaos, has attracted widespread attention. During recent weeks, a Harvard audience has listened to his lectures on a kindred theme with an attentiveness and enthusiasm of a rare kind. We are privileged to welcome Father Gunn's commentary on these addresses and his essay in interpretation of M. Gilson's views of "Christian" philosophy.—The Editors.

AN INTEREST in philosophy that can only be compared with the wider medieval interest in philosophy is being shown at the William James Lectures, Harvard University, which are given this year by Professor Etienne Gilson, historian and philosopher. The acclaim M. Gilson received on the occasion of his address at the Tercentenary Celebration continues in Cambridge.

Various nationalities and various philosophies meet each week to hear M. Gilson lecture on "The Unity of Philosophical Experience." A small minority of white-haired men and women who have clung to the Harvard tradition come to compare M. Gilson with James, Royce and Palmer. About two hundred professional people, physicians, lawyers, professors, teachers, librarians, doctors of philosophy, come to see if anything new can be said about Descartes and Kant. Another two hundred, undergraduate students of Harvard, Radcliffe and the neighboring colleges, come moved by the primal student curiosity to find out what philosophy has to do with them or they with philosophy.

The seriousness of the gathering is matched by the straightforward, businesslike manner of the lecturer. M. Gilson, a Frenchman by birth, is a citizen of the world. A man seemingly in the late forties, of sturdy build, erect carriage, dark hair, sanguine complexion, M. Gilson on entering Emerson Hall is related to all before him, to the oldest and to the youngest. Everyone present knows that M. Gilson while still a professor at the Sorbonne lectured at Harvard in 1926 and was appointed to a half-time professorship at Harvard in 1927, serving in that capacity until 1929. More recently he has divided his time between the Collège de France, Paris, and the Institute of Medieval Studies, Toronto, of which he is a director.

The professor is an example of high purpose and proportionate effort. Every lecture is fresh from his pen, new with the strength of a mind that is continuously rethinking the Greeks, the Medievalists and the Moderns. M. Gilson gives the impression that the study of philosophy merits the close attention of the best prepared minds and the interest of all.

As might be expected or might not be expected, according to one's attitude toward work, this persistent scholar has a fine sense of humor. The interesting thing to him about the recurrence of certain errors in philosophy is not that they recur but that they are to be accounted for in each case by an interior feeling that has not been disciplined by exterior reality. The difference between any given individualistic idea and a world view is one of the funniest facts in the world. Along with a sense of humor and an easy smile goes a poetic sense that some deny to philosophers. Though M. Gilson must be much more at home in the French language than in the English, his lectures in English include examples of rhythmical prose inspired by the highest poetic feeling.

Perhaps the most outstanding feature of the present course of lectures is the uniform kindliness of the lecturer combined with reassuring sureness of judgment. For M. Gilson truth seeking and argumentation are entirely free from the carping and cranky criticism which often marred the serenity of medieval debates. M. Gilson seems never to let a personal motive blind his appraisal of any philosopher. As a faithful historian he, on the one hand, seeks out the "forgotten" men of philosophy, and, on the other hand, gives no man the credit of having solved all the problems of philosophy. His study, however, of "the words of the philosophers themselves" has convinced him that Saint Thomas Aquinas without saying the last word on philosophy worked out a true philosophy whose principles are applicable to present-day problems.

The picture of the Gilson lectures at Harvard would be incomplete unless it included as a background the fact that M. Gilson sprinkles the history of philosophy with references to Christian dogma. It is not a case of confusing faith and reason, for M. Gilson knows well that faith and reason are distinct though in contact with one another. M. Gilson in his book, "The Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas," says that fear of contaminating reason by faith is "un-Thomistic":

> To assert that Saint Thomas is unaware of, or opposed to the beneficial influence of faith in developing philosophy is to present as fundamentally inexplicable the accord which, in point of fact, his reconstruction of philosophy and theology ultimately reaches.

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Faith and reason are distinct in the sense that natural propositions require direct proof "based on the evidence of first principles common to all human minds"; whereas revealed propositions admit of only an indirect proof, namely, a proof of the reliability of the witness, the human words in which the revealed message is couched being a point of contact between religion and philosophy. Again:

> [Philosophy] is concerned with the consideration of created things and endeavors to work upward to God. In doctrines of faith, on the contrary, which considers created things in relation to God, the consideration of God comes first and that of creation afterward.

On the other hand, the two are interrelated, namely, reason supports faith, else an act of faith could not be meritorious to man; and faith both preserves reason from error in points of common interest and guides reason to investigate problems of whose existence reason would be otherwise unaware. The mere fact that Revelation brings "good news" to man in words that belong to human philosophy prepares us to hear of an extension, in depth at least, of the field of philosophy in the ages of faith. For example, the words creation, revelation, transubstantiation, and grace, cannot be merely words. If they are to have universal meaning, philosophy must demonstrate the possibility of Revelation and what it implies from reason and nature. The function of faith then, according to M. Gilson, "is not to destroy the rationality of our knowledge but to supply a completion and counterpoise of mental balance." To use an example, if philosophy apart from religion did all it could for man, there would remain an unfilled space at the top of the mind and a yearning to fill it. If God had made no supernatural revelation to man, there would be room for it. When, and in proportion to its clearness, revelation did come to man the meaning of heaven heightened and the meaning of nature deepened.

Now only because M. Gilson keeps his mind poised at the midpoint between two extremes, namely, the idea that philosophy has no relation to religion and another idea that philosophy has no certainty except through religion, the references he makes to religion are not merely legitimate, they are inspiring. His freedom of expression springs from his accurate definitions of the two branches of learning, philosophy and religion. Philosophy is the first of the two, from the point of view of nature, based, as it is, "on its own foundation of *being* abstracted from existing nature" and developed solely *ab intra* through an analysis of being. Religion is the higher of the two, from the point of view of the supernatural, its guidance of philosophy being entirely external to philosophy. The two disciplines are, like two hands, mutually helpful; but, like two hands, can be completely separated, though M. Gilson would be the last to order their separation.

To understand better the technique that M. Gilson uses in his lectures, we should study his latest translated book, "The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy." In this work he sets out to answer a much disputed question, namely, the possibility, not to say the advisability, of qualifying the noun philosophy by the adjective Christian.

In this controversy some teachers of scholastic philosophy have invoked the principle that the universal value of philosophy lies solely "in the fact that it is true" and from this have argued that philosophy is neither Christian nor pagan. M. Gilson, however, does not admit the conclusion because it does not square with the history of the development of philosophy. He freely admits, indeed, that, if one abstracts from the influence religion has had on philosophy, "in this sense it is clear that a philosophy cannot be Christian, nor for that matter Jewish or Mussulman, and that the idea of Christian philosophy has no more meaning than 'Christian physics' or 'Christian mathematics.'" But it is not the part of a philosopher to consider "philosophy in itself, in its formal essence as philosophy, abstraction being made from the conditions which rule either its constitution or its intelligibility." The last word has not yet been said about philosophy any more than the last word has been said about mathematics. Though we do not speak of Christian mathematics, we do use the terms Euclidian mathematics and Cartesian mathematics and these terms do correspond to historical realities concerning the construction of mathematics.

In "The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy," M. Gilson sets forth cogent arguments to show that "the influence of Christianity on philosophy was a reality." To take one example, he compares Aristotle's idea of God with that of Saint Thomas. Though it has often been said that Aristotle recognized One God as Supreme Being,

> . . . what is true is, that Aristotle clearly understood that God is, of all beings, the one that deserves the name of being par excellence; but that his polytheism prevented him from conceiving divinity as anything but an attribute of a class of beings. Although his First Unmoved Mover is, of all beings, in the highest degree divine and in the highest degree being, he remains nevertheless but one of these "beings as being."

Saint Thomas, having from Revelation the idea of Creator-God, used it as a hypothesis in his philosophizing until he could prove it. He reexamined nature with the technique of common sense received from Aristotle, namely, the principles of potency and act, matter and form, thought and being, but arrived at a different conclusion from that of Aristotle. For Aristotle "the first name of God is thought, and pure being is

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reduced to thought"; for Saint Thomas "the first name of God is being, and that is why we can refuse to Being neither thought, nor will, nor power, and why the attributes of the Christian God overflow the attributes of Aristotle's in every direction." M. Gilson in this connection explains that for Aristotle infinite was a negative term, meaning "not prevented from being supreme by things outside of him"; but for Saint Thomas it had a positive connotation, namely, "including all perfection or the fulness of being outside of which there is nothing." For Saint Thomas it is of the very essence of the Supreme Being, an absolute positing of which is necessary to understand other beings, to be infinite in a positive sense which Aristotle's own words exclude.

M. Gilson thus, and on through his book, keeps in touch with reality, giving the actual history of certain philosophical terms whose meaning changed as philosophy developed under the light of Christian Revelation. He concludes that since Christian Revelation entered into the construction of medieval philosophy, though without becoming part of it, that philosophy is rightly called Christian.

By the same token, since Saint Thomas used the word Christian Revelation only in the sense of the full revelation preserved intact by the Catholic Church, Thomistic philosophy is Catholic. An illustration of the difference between following the guidance of the full Revelation and of a part of Revelation is found in the same book. Luther with an eye to one part of the doctrine of original sin conceived the fixed idea that human nature is entirely corrupt and concluded that philosophy is useless. The full Catholic doctrine is that human nature, though wounded in its natural capacities, remains intrinsically good and perfectible, a Christian dogma that commends, rather than condemns, the philosophical definition of man.

To evaluate the overtones of M. Gilson's Harvard lectures, we should look at this course as the completion of a trilogy. M. Gilson has always kept in mind the true relation of faith, reason and reality. In his book, "The Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas," he clearly defines the relation of faith and reason; in his Aberdeen lectures, published under the title of "The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy," he proves that the medieval construct was Christian and Catholic, in the sense that though reason is purely reason the use of reason may be Christian, pagan, Jewish or Mussulman; in the Harvard lectures he is proving that the test of a given philosophy is its relation to reality.

Mr. Gilson sounded the keynote of his current lectures in the never-to-be-forgotten Tercentenary address, saying:

> In the thirteenth century as in our days, there was a common agreement on a certain number of fundamental doctrines, because all philosophers admitted the existence of an order of things and tried to express it. As the things were the same for all of them, what they could say about them was at least comparable.

If there is one thing more than another that Americans need it is a larger vocabulary of comparable terms. How can we understand one another without it? In the Tercentenary address, M. Gilson also said that when the University of Paris was in its glory there was a "unity of faith, of language, and of philosophy." A return to a unity of faith seems impossible; Latin is dead except in the Church; but there still remains the possibility of a unity in that which, though finally consummated in faith alone, as the supreme example of medieval universalism so well illustrates, "nevertheless remains distinct from it," namely, the philosophy of moderate realism. M. Gilson holds out as the only hope of our times "a widely spread revival of the Greek and medieval principle, that truth, morality, social justice and beauty are necessary and universal in their own right."

In the present lectures M. Gilson develops this idea. He shows quite convincingly that whenever philosophy was in disrepute from Abelard's day onward and whenever it led into dead-end alleys philosophy had been divorced from external reality. The title of the course, "The Unity of Philosophical Experience," means, it appears to me, that the fate of the philosopher depends on his relation to reality.

The series of twelve lectures, ending December 18, 1936, is divided into three parts: "The Breakdown of Medieval Philosophy"; "The Breakdown of Cartesianism"; "The Breakdown of Kantianism and Modern Philosophy." In the first part, the lecturer gave Saint Thomas the credit of being "one man who had the faculty of putting things in their right place." Some medievalists who knew only logic were not philosophers; others who confused theology with philosophy prepared the way for scepticism; others having put their trust in psychology or ethics without relation to either the realities of nature or of religion became sceptics. The fruit of their work was logicism, theologism, psychologism, various moralisms, and scepticism, each in turn masquerading as philosophy and thus preparing for Descartes.

The high tragedy of modern life is that the world should be so late in reviving Thomistic realism. Saint Thomas himself was so much alone in his fight for the truth of otherness that within fifty years of his death the essential lessons he taught were already neglected. His contemporaries failed, Descartes failed, Kant and his numerous successors failed, because they neglected Saint Thomas's vision of sticks and stones, i. e., created reality. Father Sertillanges has well said that reality pervades philosophy; he meant and

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M. Gilson means that philosophy is a misnomer unless it is related to the visible universe. In other words, the proper preparation for metaphysics is an alert humility before the matter of fact.

If, moreover, there is an uncreated reality, immanent in and yet transcending nature, its contact with the world must be discoverable, else how can it be known? M. Gilson has said elsewhere that a Personal God is discoverable and has long since been described by the combined work of Plato, Aristotle and Saint Thomas in the "five ways," namely, the First Mover, the First Cause, the Necessary Being, the Perfect Being, and the Intelligent Provider. God is the beginning and the end of the universal philosophy, which is therefore that of a divine relativism, namely, Another's life within us gratis according to our will and capacity to receive it; that Other guiding us from within by natural law and, if from without, by supernatural law; our use of life, whether natural merely or above all supernatural, being thus directed toward the One Source of all life in union with all other human bodies and souls. Any other philosophy is human relativism pure and simple. The rationalists, the subjectivists, the determinists, the materialists, and in our day the Communists, all are right and philosophy is entirely relative to the individual mind *except* that God exists, the ultimate and absolute reality.

Objectively it is God that matters, as M. Gilson implies in treating the failures in philosophy and as we all see in the war of ideas in Europe. Communism, I expect, will be discussed as the latest philosophy that lacks a world view, which, after all, is the only complete view. Claiming that their theory of history "comprehends our whole recorded past," Communists in the interest of a new social order deny the existence of God, even the God of Aristotle. Be it remembered that Aristotle though a pagan recognized God as objectively real.

Subjectively, it is the study of metaphysics that matters since religionists and anti-religionists differ, first of all, in the matter of metaphysics. Even if Communism is motivated by hatred of religion, our work is to persuade Communists by love, certainly never by hatred or even personal criticism, to open their eyes to the Marxian departmentalization of metaphysics. One of their student propagandists said to me, in answer to my question, "Why do you wish me to avoid the mention of metaphysics?" "Because there is too damn much metaphysics in Communism now." He erred objectively. It was because he had not studied metaphysics at all that we had no common vocabulary.

For the future there remains this alternative: either wait till Communism fails for want of a sound metaphysic; or adopt a study-teaching program to the end that we may have bread and not stones for our people, for all people, and for Communists as well.

A MEDIO DIA

By LILIAN LINCOLN SAUNDERS

TATA CHUCHO hoed his little patch of corn diligently, one eye on the big clock in the campanario of the cathedral.

He could watch the clock quite easily since the corn was growing unobtrusively at one side of the patio surrounding the church.

It would be a fine crop: the ears were already swelling magnificently and the silk was beginning to peep out at the top. The little old man was proud of the tall, upstanding rows with their broad green leaves, and a smile wrinkled the small face, round and brown as a filbert.

Nevertheless, in spite of the promise of plenty of corn for the *tortillas* of the coming year, there was a trace of uneasiness in the smile. In these days it was not always easy to know how to follow the path of duty, and he was more than a little uncertain as to the propriety of planting his corn in these sacred precincts. *Claro,* it was irregular, but what could he do? Now that he had everything on his hands he could not trot back and forth between the cathedral and his little adobe hut on the outskirts of the town where, until now, he had always grown his corn on his own little strip of ground.

But everything was *trastornado* now!

Since the edict against the Church, which had torn to shreds the religious fabric of the country, and brought about the banishment of the priests, the closing of the churches and the scattering of all the functionaries who had administered holy affairs, Tata Chucho had been virtually in charge of the empty cathedral.

This had come about quite naturally. For twenty-five years he had rung the big bell of the cathedral, tolling the hours from sunrise to sunset and solemnly announcing the deaths in the village. So, because he was on honest man and well thought of in the community, the Municipality, after the upheaval, had retained him as bell-ringer, a municipal job now instead of a religious office. Tata Chucho was content, though he missed the flow of the robes that he had been used to, and did not like the workman's overalls

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and blouse that the new régime forced him to wear. The Municipality paid him his weekly stipend instead of the Church, but that meant nothing to Tata Chucho. He tolled the hours in the service of God just as he had done for twenty-five years and as his father had done before him, and he counted himself fortunate, for the cathedral was his life.

And because he was a *viejecito* of gentle, quiet dignity, who had always taken his office very seriously, and also because nobody knew just what was to be done with the churches under the new law, no one interfered with him as, little by little, since there was no one else to look after things, he took upon himself the entire care and control of the deserted cathedral, consulting nobody, since there seemed nobody to consult, and trembling often at the audacity of his decisions.

Indeed, it is certain that the *Commandante* at the *cuartel* would have taken drastic action if he had ever learned that one night, with the greatest secrecy and in silence like that of the grave, the great red threshing machine of Don Romildo, which had escaped confiscation by a miracle during the days of the rioting, was, with the connivance of Tata Chucho, tugged and pushed through the big doors of the cathedral and was even now reposing in a secluded corner of the building.

"It would be safe there," Tata Chucho had assured Don Romildo. "*Nuestra Señora* must have blinded the eyes of the soldiers when they took the rest of the machinery from the *hacienda,* and no doubt she would continue to protect it."

So there it stayed, the enormous red *trilladera,* majestic and awe-inspiring, so that it is likely that some of the peons, lacking spiritual guidance and yearning for something tangible to cling to, said their prayers to it. Not so illogical, if one stops to think, for it might well be the symbol of Tonantzin, the Goddess of Fertility.

Yes, Tata Chucho was much occupied, and naturally, with the bell to be rung every hour from sunrise to sunset, with the patio to be kept in order, the flowers watered and weeded, the church itself to be kept clean with no help but that of a few pious women, naturally he must have his corn there under his eyes. He could not leave the church, since there must always be someone on hand to keep the dogs and beggars out of the patio and someone to answer the questions of the *extranjeros,* who continually wanted to know this and that. The *Americanos, los del Norte,* were the worst. They had little red books; they would turn over the leaves and point here and there and ask, ask, ask! Chucho could always think of something to say; he had a little English.

And there were graves to be dug and deaths to be tolled. For the graves he was paid extra and for the tolling, but the other duties he assumed voluntarily and fulfilled them with a religious fervor that approached fanaticism.

It was more than a year now since the night of the last Mass, when the cathedral had been so crowded that the faithful could hardly find room to stand or air to breathe. Many of them were sobbing aloud and some of them were crossing themselves unceasingly and even those who had given little thought to the Church when its blessing fell upon them like sun rays from heaven were now looking frightened and helpless and trying to remember the words of long-forgotten prayers.

As for Tata Chucho, when he rang the bell for vespers for the last time, he felt as if the end of the world had come.

The next morning the town was filled with soldiers. They had seized the *Padre* and hustled him away, nobody ever knew what became of him. Some of the rich men of the village had been dragged to the Plaza and shot, nobody knew why, and some who tried to run away were shot too.

Tata Chucho did not toll the bell for those deaths, for the patio of the cathedral and even the cathedral itself were full of soldiers—the *cuartel* was not big enough to hold all the troops—and Chucho himself was in hiding, not knowing from one day to another what might happen to him. It was a time of great fear. . . .

After a while things grew more quiet and most of the soldiers went away, but because there was much rebellion in the country round about and many people had taken refuge in the mountains and were organizing bands of revolutionaries, a detachment of soldiers was left in the *cuartel,* and that was why, toward noon, Chucho always kept one eye on the clock in the bell tower as he hoed his corn or pulled weeds in the patio.

For at twelve o'clock, *en punto,* the bugler of the troops sounded the mess call in the *cuartel,* and Chucho, his heart filled with devotion, with religious fervor, with loyalty to the Church, made it a point of honor to anticipate the blast of the midday bugle by the clang of his full-throated bell, ringing out his twelve booming notes at least one minute before *medio dia.*

It was more than a point of honor with him—it was a rite, a sacrament—and his soul was filled with exultation each time that he achieved this triumph over the temporal forces that had brought his world tumbling about his ears.

His joy was not lessened by the fact that he could not share it with anyone. So far nobody had suspected his little maneuver and he had confided it to nobody. It was a secret between him and God. If it were discovered, who could tell what might happen! Men had been shot for less. At the very least, they would take away his keys and drive him out of the cathedral—and the cathedral was his life!

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So he exulted over his daily victory in secret, with all the fervor of the Keeper of the Holy Grail, and each day at five minutes to twelve he stopped work, took out his bunch of keys and climbed the forty-five steps of the *campanario,* and at one minute to twelve the mellow tones of the cathedral bell announced that the longed-for respite from labor had come — the hour when Luisita or Justina would bring the midday *tortillas* and *frijoles* to her man, and the two would sit on the ground and eat, talking over their small affairs, with the *chamacos* sitting gravely beside them, playing with bits of stick or lumps of gravel.

Twelve round silver tones would fill the air and Chucho would descend the stairs, tucking his keys into some secret hiding place of his clothing, eat his *tortillas* and resume his labors. There was always so much to be done.

It was nearing twelve now: ten minutes to the hour, to be exact. Chucho laid down his hoe with a sigh of relief and wiped beads of perspiration from his forehead, taking off his sombrero and pushing back the damp grey hair that straggled down into his eyes; the morning's work had been hard and the July sun was hot. He walked slowly across the patio toward the bell tower, fumbling mechanically for the keys as he went.

Where were the keys?

He stopped in consternation. He remembered tucking them in his belt as he came down the stairs after ringing eleven o'clock—but where were they now? Had they fallen as he crossed the patio, or had they dropped from his belt as he hoed the corn? They might be anywhere—and less than ten minutes to find them! His thoughts whirled! He took a step toward the bell tower, then turned toward the corn patch. No, he must make up his mind, there was no time to look in both places! He would certainly have heard them if they had dropped on the stone steps; if they had dropped in the corn patch he might have to turn over the ground from one end to the other, he might have to search for hours, and he had only minutes! It was five minutes to twelve! He would look in the patio and pray that God might guide his footsteps!

Which way had he come? In front of the fountain . . . yes, surely in front of the fountain. And also in front of the old tomb stone of Fray Sebastiano . . . yes, in front of that. He remembered noticing for the hundredth time that the S was turned the wrong way. And then toward the corn patch as he chased a small boy out of the patio. He ran back with little trotting steps, following the trail like a bloodhound. They must be along there somewhere, but he could never make it by twelve o'clock—never! Lucky that the keys were so big and that there was so many of them. He had kept them all, though most of them unlocked nothing now. The treasure chests were empty, the gold and silver utensils had been confiscated, the embroidered robes destroyed, by those *picarones,* those *tunantes,* whose bugles brayed so impudently and arrogantly, glorying in the annihilation of the Church!

Ah! There were the keys! Perhaps there was still time. . . . But when he was half way up the stairs he heard the first blast of the bugle.

He was trembling with excitement, his fingers shook so that he could scarcely unlock the door of the tower room. He flung himself on the ropes and pulled like a madman. The deep-toned bell pealed out like the roll of thunder, the reverberation tore through the thinner tones of the bugle like a battle cry, frenzied, magnificent, God-like!

Tata Chucho thrilled to the sound, swaying his whole body as he pulled on the ropes, swinging his weight with the bell as it swung. . . . One! Two! Three! Four! Five! Six! Seven! Eight! Nine! Ten! Eleven! Twelve! Thirteen! . . . Chucho had lost count. . . . He pulled the bell frantically. Fourteen! Fifteen! Sixteen! The noon hour was forgotten, he thought only of drowning out the voice of the enemy, the blare of the hateful bugle!

Seventeen! Eighteen! Nineteen! The bugle, suddenly sensing the conflict, burst into a strident paean of triumph. The great resonant voice of the bell answered with a peal of defiance. Twenty! Thirty! Forty! The shrill clamor of the bugle tortured the air. The clang of the bell grew wilder, fulminating gloriously, exultantly! Fifty! Sixty! The very heavens were splitting! . . .

Suddenly the bell was silent and the bugle, as if bewildered by the unexpected lull, hazarded an aimless *diana,* then was still. There was a death-like hush. . . .

A group of tourists gathered together in the patio looked at each other in amazement.

"*What* do you suppose that was?"

"I cannot imagine, but it was the most awe-inspiring thing I ever heard!"

"That bell sounded like a challenge, a tocsin, a call to arms! Did you ever hear such a magnificent antiphony?"

"You wanted a motif for a Mexican Symphony. There you have it—the conflict between Divine Power and the forces of destruction: between the two Mexico is brayed as in a mortar."

"I wish that darling little old man would come, the one who told us all about everything yesterday. He could tell us what it all meant."

But he did not come and when the soldiers marched into the patio, as of course they did, to see if Tata Chucho had suddenly gone crazy, and to drag him off to the judge, they found him lying, very small, very frail, very old—dead on the floor of the campanario, dead in the service of God.

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WHO ARE THE LAITY?

By J. ELLIOT ROSS

WHO ARE the laity? Probably in these days when there is so much talk of Catholic Action, many devout and loyal laymen will be interested in learning how Bishop England, of Charleston, South Carolina, answered that question by giving the laity a constitutional position in the diocese actualizing the definition of the catechism that the Church is not merely the clergy, but a union of *all* the faithful.

When Bishop England took charge of the Diocese of Charleston, he found it afflicted with the evils of trusteeism. Lay trustees of the different parishes were claiming a right of veto over episcopal appointments. In certain instances rebellious priests sided with the trustees against the Bishop, and a schism resulted.

Confronted by these evils coming from a usurpation of authority by the laity, the natural reaction of a new bishop with a forceful character might easily have been to put the laity sternly in their place and to allow them no more participation in the affairs of the Church than they had as minimum rights. And if Bishop England had taken this attitude no one could have blamed him. But his faith in democracy was deep rooted. Paradoxically, he cured the evils of trusteeism by granting to the laity a larger degree of participation in the apostolate of the hierarchy than they enjoyed in other American dioceses. For an usurped authority infringing on his rights as bishop, he substituted a constitutional position in the Church that satisfied the desire of the laity to feel they were really part of the Church.

On September 25, 1823, less than three years after his installation, Bishop England published a "constitution" of the diocese, and on November 24 of the same year the first Convention of the Roman Catholic Church of South Carolina assembled. Georgia was organized under the constitution on April 2, 1826, and North Carolina on May 15, 1829. Annual conventions were held in the three states until November 17, 1839, when delegates from the whole diocese met in the first diocesan-wide convention. Several such conventions of the whole diocese were held before Bishop England's declining health prevented his calling any more. Under his successor, the constitution fell into innocuous desuetude.

The constitution was divided into seven parts, dealing with doctrine, government, property, membership, district churches, the annual convention of clergy and laity, and amendment of the constitution. In regard to doctrine and government, Bishop England gave a masterly summary especially suited for the Church in America. For instance, he says of those who are outside the Church through no fault of their own, that Catholics, leaving them to the judgment of a merciful God, "feel bound to discharge toward them, as well as toward all mankind, the duties of charity and of social life."

On the important and delicate question of the relations between Church and State, the constitution comes out quite clearly. It avers:

> We do not believe that our Lord Jesus Christ gave to the civil or temporal governments of states, empires, kingdoms or nations any authority in or over spiritual or ecclesiastical concerns. We do not believe that our Lord Jesus Christ gave to His Church, as such, any authority in or over the civil and temporal concerns of states, empires, kingdoms or nations.

With an eye to the charge that Catholics could not be loyal citizens because of their allegiance to the Pope, the constitution defines the spiritual authority of the Pope, and goes on:

> We do not believe that by virtue of his spiritual or ecclesiastical authority, the Pope hath any right to interfere in or with the concerns of the civil policy or the temporal government thereof, or of the United States of America.

Having disposed of the general government of the Church, the constitution provides for a division of the Charleston diocese into three districts —North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia. For the management of the temporalities of the Church in each district, a vestry was to be formed consisting of the priests of the district *ex officio,* and a number of laymen to be chosen by the members of that district. At the same time it was clearly stated that the bishop, and the bishop alone, had the power of appointing priests for the performance of "spiritual and ecclesiastical duties" in any district. In case a suspended priest appealed to a higher ecclesiastical authority, the judgment of the bishop was to obtain until the higher authority rendered a verdict.

In the division on property Bishop England faced the problem of trusteeism. As is well known, lay trustees in that period in this country had been creating great trouble for the bishops. In many instances parochial property and funds were in the name of lay trustees, and if the bishop appointed a pastor who was not acceptable to them they sometimes refused him access to the church buildings. On the other hand, if the bishop removed a pastor who stood well with the trustees, the priest, were he rebellious, might continue to

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use the church with the sanction of the trustees, creating a schism.

The constitution of the Diocese of Charleston guarded against these evils, but at the same time it gave the laity a greater voice in the management of temporalities than they have in most dioceses today. For instance, the general diocesan fund, to which each Catholic was expected to contribute by the lay delegates in the annual convention. of the bishop *ex officio* president, and his vicar general *ex officio* vice-president, with five priests elected by the clergy, and twelve laymen elected by the lay delegates in the annual convention. One interesting provision was that funds raised for specific objects should be kept in separate accounts and be used only for the objects for which they were given.

To qualify as an officer of any kind, such as trustee, vestryman, delegate to the annual convention, one had to be a member of the diocese. The conditions for membership were that one should be a baptized man at least twenty-one, free from church censures, and a resident within the diocese who had subscribed to the constitution. As the Tridentine Creed was made a part of the chapter on doctrine, this meant giving assent to that summary of Catholic belief. Membership might be lost by denial of Catholic doctrine, by abetting an unauthorized priest in performing religious services or obstructing an authorized priest in the performance of his duties, and by refusing for one year to contribute to the support of the Church.

Only the bishop might form a new parish, but once formed the laity had a definite place in it. A vestry was to be elected by members in good standing. This vestry had the right to choose the organist, sexton and any other lay officers of the parish. Annual accounts of each parish were to be sent to the bishop before the first Sunday in January. The method of procedure was laid down in case the congregation desired the removal of its pastor. It is evident from all this that parishioners might know what was collected each year, for what purpose, how it was spent, and what balance or deficit remained.

It was provided that an annual convention should be held in some place designated by the bishop. Public notice was to be given two months in advance. All priests not exempt from the jurisdiction of the bishop were to attend, and they formed the House of the Clergy. The House of Lay Delegates consisted of laymen elected from the various parishes. These were graded according to population, being entitled to one, two or four delegates as the case might be. The House of the Clergy was presided over by the priest of highest dignity or the senior by ordination. Lay Delegates elected their own president. Each House appointed its own officers and determined its program of business. But the convention had no right to interfere in regard to the doctrine or discipline of the Church, spiritual jurisdiction, or appointment of the clergy.

There was a rough correspondence in all this to the American system of government. First of all, there was a written constitution, then the bishop was something like the president, while the House of the Clergy was similar to the Senate, and the House of Lay Delegates corresponded somewhat to the House of Representatives. The resemblance to the organization of the Protestant Episcopal Church was even closer. And those of the hierarchy opposed to Bishop England were not slow in voicing their opinion that the arrangement was too democratic and too Protestant.

To guard against criticism, Bishop England was very clear in stating that the convention was not a portion of the ecclesiastical government of the diocese, but rather

> . . . to be considered as a body of prudent, sage and religious counsellors to aid the proper ecclesiastical governor of the Church in the discharge of his duty, by their advice and exertions in obtaining and applying the necessary pecuniary means to those purposes which will be most beneficial, and in superintending the several persons who have charge thereof; to see that the money be honestly and beneficially expended.

The convention had the right to dispose of the general fund of the diocese. The House of the Clergy was empowered to examine into the ecclesiastical concerns of such establishments as were supported from the general fund, and to make its private report to the bishop. But no act was to be valid unless passed by a majority of both Houses and approved by the bishop.

Bishop England had sent a copy of the constitution to the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda before putting it into effect. It is not clear whether it was ever formally approved, but since, in all, fifteen conventions were held in South Carolina, eight in Georgia, and two in North Carolina, besides three general conventions for the whole diocese, in 1839, 1840, and 1841, at least a tacit approval may be presumed.

Each convention was opened with a solemn Mass at which Bishop England preached. In his address before the thirteenth convention for South Carolina, 1837, he summed up the results of this system:

> Thirteen years have elapsed since this Constitution has, by our solemn act, after repeated deliberations, been the rule of our proceedings. By its provisions the limits of our several powers and duties are accurately defined; it has prevented discord, it has banished jealousy, it has secured peace, it has produced efforts of cooperation, and established mutual confidence and affection between our several churches, as well as between the bishop and the churches, and by confirming the rights of all, it has insured the

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support of all. So long as its provisions are scrupulously observed, it is hoped that those blessings will also continue, but if a deviation be once made from its principles, I fear that we should thereby be thrown into a chaos of uncertainty.

In 1838, Bishop England decided that the diocese was sufficiently well organized to hold one general convention instead of three state conventions. Accordingly the first convention embracing the whole diocese assembled at Charleston November 17, 1839, and lasted for a week. The second general convention was held November 7-15, 1840. Lacking Bishop England's strong leadership, the third convention, held during his absence at the Baltimore Council, did nothing. Unfortunately, Bishop England died the following year, and two years intervened before a successor was installed. Under Bishop Reynolds the convention became a dead letter.

The convention addresses of Bishop England are masterly surveys of the state of the Church and of the nation. Thus in speaking before the second general convention, 1840, he was confronted by the aftermath of a very serious economic depression and his words have a curiously contemporaneous ring:

> It is a notorious fact, beloved brethren, that avarice and ambition pervade our country to an alarming extent. The spirit of acquisition which, properly moderated, produces industrious exertion, and is promotive of the prosperity of a people, when unchecked by the restraints of religion, and condemning the ancient maxims of morality, it seeks only self and disregards what is due to others, leads into the wildest speculation, entertains the most visionary projects, and calculates its own success upon its ability to overreach or to delude. This has been one of the master spirits which for years has had rule amongst us. Ambition is its kindred companion and was found, together with it, exercising an equal influence, and, if possible, was more reckless of the means that it employed. To these in all ages, as to a natural cause, the ruin of religion may be traced; they are what the Saviour designates as the world, and with which His spirit could hold no communion, because they are diametrically opposed. It is therefore that He told us, that no man can serve two masters, you cannot serve God and Mammon. And unfortunately, Mammon has been too long our master and we have been his obsequious slaves.

Summing up the effect of the constitution and conventions, Dr. Guilday thinks that they accomplished great good in creating an esprit de corps by making known to one another the widely scattered Catholics of a geographically enormous diocese. Religiously and spiritually nothing but good came of them. The chief failure was that they did not produce the financial support Bishop England had expected. He remained harassed by debt and largely dependent upon the contributions of foreign missionary societies. But it would seem perfectly true that he received greater local support than he would have received otherwise.

Moreover, the peace and harmony of the Charleston diocese under this system were in striking contrast with some of the other dioceses. But bishops with the zeal, tact and qualities of Bishop England would have been needed to administer the system elsewhere. Without those qualities in the bishops, such a diocesan organization might easily lead to more harm than good. Under imprudent or weak bishops the Church might have become involved disastrously in politics.

Under Bishop England politics was carefully eschewed. Many of his utterances were calculated to reassure non-Catholics as to the danger of a strongly organized Catholic body in their midst. In his pastoral letter of 1840, he said:

> We desire to see the Catholics as a religious body upon the ground of equality with all other religious societies. We desire as citizens, to see them merged in the bulk of their fellow citizens, and we consider that man who would call upon them to stand aloof from their brethren in the politics of the country, as neither a friend to America nor a friend to Catholics. . . . We repeat then our own maxim: "Let Catholics in religion stand isolated as a body, and upon as good ground as their brethren. Let Catholics, as citizens and politicians, not be distinguishable from their brethren of the commonwealth."

Herein he expressed very admirably the principle that should ever actuate us.

Woodland Bridge

This bridge of timbers aged in sun
Spans the woodland brook that shines
Below it, and above it pines
And oaks have made another one
Where only sunbeam, squirrel, and bird
Cross softly as each whispered word
The brook breathes like an orison.

What crosses this old bridge below
The brighter bridge of boughs I know
By watching from the wooded slope
Where tapers of the sumac glow.

I see the casual rabbit lope
Among the leaves winds whirl across,
Crimson and gold, like wings that toss
But do not lift enough to fly.
I see the red fox trotting by
And hear above the quiet stream
The stir of little padded feet
I cannot see in minds that meet
Upon the bridge, and I surprise,
In crossing, many a woodland dream
That watches me with questioning eyes.

GLENN WARD DRESBACH.

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Seven Days' Survey

The Church.—The first meeting of the Catholic Student Peace Federation was held at the College of St. Elizabeth, Convent, N. J., November 7, with delegates from thirty-one Catholic and non-sectarian colleges and universities in the Middle Atlantic States attending. During a day of interesting meetings students from the various colleges gave short talks on American foreign policy, Communism and Fascism, and Catholic principles and their effect on world peace. Other regional meetings are planned for the near future in similar collaboration with the Catholic Association for International Peace. * * * The rumor that in the restoration work in the Sistine Chapel veils are to be painted over some of the nude figures of Michaelangelo is categorically denied in authentic Vatican circles. * * * On the advice of ecclesiastical superiors Sister Rita of Casia Hall, Detroit, is seeking to found a religious community, known as Augustinian Mission Helpers, to labor in foreign tenement districts. In the past five years Casia Hall has prepared 900 underprivileged children for their First Communion. * * * Archbishop Hinsley was a guest of honor at a dinner of 150 survivors of the London dock strike of 1889, in which the workers had been ably supported by Cardinal Manning. The Archbishop declared, "We must make our docklands fit and proper places for men to live and work in." * * * Reverend Francis J. Haas, rector of St. Francis Seminary, Milwaukee, speaking at a conference of WPA White Collar Workers' organizations in Cleveland, welcomed the fact that "white collar workers have begun to realize . . . that they are after all working people and that they must do the same as working people do to protect themselves—unite in organized bodies and choose their own representatives to represent them. * * * The Most Reverend Charles F. Buddy of St. Joseph, Mo., newly elected Bishop of San Diego, is the founder of St. Vincent's Cafeteria and Men's Shelter which at one time gave 3,000 meals a day and sheltered 700 men. * * * In the course of his American visit Cardinal Pacelli went to 12 of the nation's 16 ecclesiastical provinces and talked with 79 bishops in all. Thousands of the faithful assembled at the pier to bid him farewell.

The Nation.—Although reports emanating from San Francisco declared that ship owners and sea unions were taking steps in conciliation, the ports of the country were still tied up. Intercoastal shipping was at a complete standstill, and only a few liners, and those with great difficulty, left for transoceanic ports. Secretary Hull's South American party was held up eight hours waiting while a full crew was obtained. Officials of the International Seamen's Union who are fighting the rank and file strike were recruiting the crews in New York. These men were accused by strikers of putting aboard ships unqualified personnel and strikebreakers who came from other states contrary to the federal law. * * * After uncompromising speeches by John L. Lewis, chairman of the Committee for Industrial Organization, President Green of the American Federation of Labor indicated that he believed there would soon be two federations of labor unions in the country. No unions aligned with the C. I. O. were to be admitted to the national convention of the A. F. of L. at Tampa, Fla., on November 16. * * * An Iowa law imposing a steeply graduated tax on the gross receipts of chain-store companies was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. The Court also granted three new test cases of the Wagner Labor Relations Act and permitted a mass suit against the TVA. The District of Columbia Court of Appeals upheld the right of the National Labor Relations Board to hold plant elections, and the Board certified the regular union for collective bargaining with the Radio Corporation of America in Camden, throwing out claims of the company union. Proposals to curb the power of the Supreme Court were anticipated in Congress. * * * An avalanche of prosperity news followed the election, steel companies taking the lead in announcing wage increases. General Motors granted a record dividend to stockholders, a large bonus to salaried employees, and a $20,000,000 pay rise to wage earners. American Telephone and Telegraph, which has the largest pension system in the country, announced it would not deduct from it when the federal pension fund gets into operation. * * * The Reverend Charles E. Coughlin broadcast on November 7 that his "thoroughly discredited" National Union for Social Justice will cease to be active and that he himself was "hereby withdrawing from all radio activity in the best interests of all the people."

The Wide World.—In Spain a bitter struggle was in progress for control of Madrid. But defending forces, now entirely under the control of extreme Leftist groups, put up an unexpectedly stiff resistance along the Manzanares River and sent new fleets of airplanes into action. The capital city was bombed frequently, and heavy artillery fire was leveling whole districts in outlying suburbs. As this report was being written, insurgent troops were reported to have reached the city proper, attacking from both north and south. It was estimated that more than 1,500,000 persons remained within the area sure to be the scene of bloody house-to-house conflict. The Azaña government, now utterly without the power to influence the trend of events, was removed to Valencia and Barcelona. It was predicted that a desperate stand would ultimately be made at this city. There are other parts of Spain which Leftist forces still control, but obviously the hopes of the resistance to General Franco are centered on Catalonia. * * * A summary of the long-planned National-Socialist Criminal Code was issued during the week. The fundamental principle is that judges must bear in mind "the German people's wholesome sense of justice" when considering what alleged offenders have done. This is a

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significant point because it abrogates all distinctions between the party and the government in so far as the administration of law is concerned. Special penalties were imposed for criticism of Nazi actions, duelling was made legitimate, and the dissemination of birth-control information was declared a punishable offense. In matters affecting religion no significant changes were reported. Cardinal Faulhaber paid a visit to Berchtesgaden, following an attempt by members of the Hitlerjugend to break up a meeting at which he spoke. At the time effective resistance was offered by Catholics. * * * In an important declaration before the House of Commons, on November 5, Mr. Anthony Eden traced the outlines of present British foreign policy. He said that the British were not trying to "encircle Germany," with which they hoped to live at peace, but that they would refuse also to be drawn into any coalition against Russia or any anti-Red crusade. The "vital interest" of the Empire in the Mediterranean was reaffirmed, friendship with France was stressed, and the preparedness program was called a step toward peace. * * * The Blum Cabinet was looking forward to coming parliamentary debates in no easy frame of mind. Despite assurance that "stay in" strikes would be prohibited, the government was faced with another one virtually on its own doorstep. Workers at the Panhard et Levassor automobile plant refused to leave the premises until assured that their demands would be considered by a board of arbitrators. The budget was also way out of balance, and prices of foodstuffs were rising.

* * * *

Administration Plans. — A bewildering number of congressional plans followed the overwhelming "mandate" of the Democratic party. The first problem the administration will place before Congress, according to the President, is that of the budget. Observers believe that will automatically bring up the subject of taxation. Progressive senators and representatives are known to desire a sweep into lower brackets of taxes based on "ability to pay," such as the income taxes and corporate taxes. Conservatives want to clear up and change the Surplus Tax Law of 1936. President Roosevelt has indicated he would have his budget ideas in form before leaving for his ocean trip on November 17. Another question sure to come up and sure to bring unlimited complication is that of administrative reorganization. The Senate Byrd Committee, a House Committee, the President's and Treasury's own Administrative Management Committee have been studying the problem in cooperation with the Brookings Institution. Elaborate reorganization of all departments and agencies of the federal government will be attempted, for the sake of economy, efficiency and in order to establish a reasonable and attractive career service. In a message to the third National Conference on Labor Legislation, made up of representatives of thirty-nine state governors and union labor, the President declared: "I believe the country has this last week given a mandate in unmistakable terms to its legislators and executives to proceed along these lines [leveling upward labor standards] until working people throughout the nation and in every state are assured decent working conditions, including safe and healthful places of work; adequate care and support when incapacitated by reason of accident, industrial disease, unemployment, or old age; reasonably short working hours, adequate annual incomes, proper housing and elimination of child labor. . . . I assure you that the federal government is willing to do its part in making these standards effective, and in supplementing the efforts of the states when problems assume an interstate or national character." Other problems which are believed due for congressional attention are farm and neutrality laws, chain store and food and drug laws and the St. Lawrence seaway project.

America's Influence for Peace.—The favorable international reaction to Mr. Roosevelt's nation-wide election sweep is held by many observers to be a convincing indication of the success of the conciliatory foreign policy of the United States under his leadership. The news was welcome at the Vatican, at Geneva and in many European capitals; Canada and our Latin-American neighbors found the nation's endorsement of the present administration particularly gratifying. After the hinting and jockeying of current diplomatic usage President Justo of Argentina cabled a formal invitation to President Roosevelt to attend the Pan-American Conference which opens at Buenos Aires, December 1. The Argentine press, long a foe of "Yankee imperialism," seemed to take his acceptance for granted and made ready to welcome him with enthusiastic acclaim. Bidding Secretary Hull and his delegation a short radio farewell Mr. Roosevelt expressed the hope that "in the solid foundation of inter-American friendship, equality and unity" the forthcoming conference would give "renewed hope and courage to the war-weary peoples of the world by demonstrating to them that the scourge of armed conflict can and will be eliminated from the Western Hemisphere." Speaking at the Guild Hall in London, November 9, British Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin declared that his government was "looking forward to a period of friendly cooperation with the government of President Roosevelt on all matters of common concern." He said that London no longer insisted on a position of "solitary leadership" in the world of international finance. Mr. Baldwin noted the similarity of American and British aims on lowering the barriers to world trade and working for the cause of world peace. Armistice Day throughout the nation was the occasion of many a prayer and fervent plea for peace; it also brought with it demands from prominent army and navy officials for larger numbers of trained officers and reserves.

The New German "Four-Year Plan."—A series of pronouncements supply an impression of what measures have been taken to inaugurate Germany's "second four-year plan." But first a word about its predecessor, the "first plan." When Hitler boasts that he has resurrected the army and made it powerful enough to ward off attack, he means of course that the nation has been mobilized for war. Labor, industry and agriculture were subordinated to *Wehrpolitik* (i. e., the science of how to conduct a war)

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in ways that are quite startling. Thus, for example, the "free labor market" no longer exists in theory. Each worker is catalogued, so that the government can use him for whatever service he is best suited. It knows where and at what he has toiled; how much training he has received; and what his political affiliations have been. To date, this has been more theoretical than real, but unions no longer exist and the *Arbeitsfront* has become primarily a vehicle for propaganda. Industry is likewise banded together, and the government's control of foreign exchange, export subsidies and similar matters have given it an ever-increasing power. More significant still is the management of foodstuffs, which has called into being a whole army of price fixers and supervisors. The government controls farmers through its new laws far more fully than Russia even now has its peasants in hand. The new "plan" envisages making Germany independent of raw materials by developing artificial substitutes—e. g., oil, rubber and wool—and by making trade agreements calculated to guarantee the supply of indispensable materials (especially metals) for the armament industries. To date, the efforts in this direction have been handicapped by costs. Germany is now producing a fair grade of artificial rubber, but prices are high. But there is reason to assume that the autarchy will be arrived at somehow, though with inevitable deterioration of the standard of living. Large portions of the population are now living on virtual rations.

China.—On January 3, a constitutional convention is to meet in Nanking to give a new governmental form to China. No change is expected in the basic idea of having the country run by General Chiang Kai-shek and his party, the Kuomintang. The group around Chiang Kai-shek is running China more effectively than ever before. At a recent meeting of military and political governors General Chiang brought together leaders from every province in China, an unprecedented accomplishment which reflects his expanding authority all over the country except in Kansu, where the Communist armies rule, and in the Hopei-Charhar district in the north, where Japan is obviously paramount. The famous Japanese demands on China have not been met by the Chinese government. The important ones are two: that the Chinese recognize the peculiar relationship to Japan of the Hopei-Charhar special area, and that the Chinese welcome Japanese military cooperation anywhere in their country against Communists. It is said that the Chinese have offered counter-demands to the Japanese Ambassador, Shigeru Kawagoe, and have prepared to fight it out with the Japanese army fortifying what they presume would be the war front. On November 5, Manchukuoan troops, together with Mongolian irregulars and soldiers from Charhar, under the influence of Japan, entered Suiyan province, which borders the North China special area and the Russian-dominated Inner Mongolia. In Shanghai the next day a Japanese resident was stabbed by Chinese terrorists, thus furnishing another "incident" upon which the Japanese military can act. On November 9, 8,000 Chinese workers struck and picketed five Japanese-owned textile mills in Shanghai, their grievances being partly economic and partly political. At the same time the Japanese-dominated council for Hopei-Charhar announced the institution of a special bank for the region and announced that vigorous action would be taken in the schools of Peiping against student cells which are anti-Japanese or pro-Communist. In Nanking it became apparent that the fund collected to give Chiang Kai-shek a birthday present of fifty airplanes was so large that the gift will end up by being 100 modern fighting airplanes.

Housman as a Teacher.—To the memory of A. E. Housman, author of "The Shropshire Lad," Mr. A. S. F. Gow has dedicated a sketch and a bibliographical essay which should at least persuade everyone that in this case at least the poet was also a scholar whose scrupulousness cannot be overemphasized. The book is entitled "A. E. Housman, a Sketch" (New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.75). During some years, Housman taught at University College; and one of his students, now Professor R. W. Chambers, recalls that he often brought tears to the eyes of his feminine students with remorseless criticism of their efforts at Latin prose. "But what, I think, hurt them more [Professor Chambers continues] was the fact that, having reduced Miss Brown, Miss Jones and Miss Robinson to tears, Housman professed, when he met them next week, not to know which was Miss Brown, which Miss Jones and which Miss Robinson. When, after nineteen years of teaching, Housman left us to take the Latin chair at Cambridge, he apologized to his assembled students, past and present, for this lack of memory. A certain Dartmoor shepherd had, just at this time, attained a place in history by getting into prison and out of it. This Dartmoor shepherd knew the faces of all his sheep. Housman ruefully admitted that *he* did not. 'But then,' he said, 'if I had remembered all your faces, I might have forgotten more important things'—not, he hastened to explain, things more important in themselves but more important to him; had he burdened his memory by the distinction between Miss Jones and Miss Robinson, he might have forgotten that between the second and the fourth declension." He was a strange person, but it is a long time since one and the same individual was congratulated for his ability to edit and emend the text of Ovid, and hailed as the most successful lyric poet of his age.

Catholic Colleges and Football.—Despite some pessimistic predictions, football keeps right on being a collegiate activity. The phenomenon of the year is, however, indicative of the seeming drift toward more good teams; and the opportunity for the small college was seemingly never better. Inside Catholic academic confines, the rise of various Jesuit schools to pigskin eminence is remarkable. Fordham leads at present, with a team able to beat off major threats like Pittsburgh and, beyond that, to beat—pure and simple—favorites like Purdue and Southern Methodist. Marquette, Detroit, Holy Cross, Georgetown and Santa Clara have all been near the top of the list; and Detroit, with Gus Dorais coaching, has evidently something new in the bag. Notre Dame, still far

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and away the favorite, seems handicapped this year by inability to play on alien soil. It has won nicely in South Bend, but was trampled underfoot by Pittsburgh and lost to Navy in one of the season's greatest thrillers. Some have opined that the Rockne system is on the way out, now that blocking in the Sutherland manner or laterals of the school of Andy Kerr have proved their efficiency; but the Notre Dame trained coaches are still doing great things, as Wisconsin's stand against Northwestern recently showed. The Catholic University squad also proves the value of this dictum. Elsewhere, as at Duquesne and Villanova, football traditions are either being upheld or are very much in the making. Madigan's "Galloping Gael" team is, of course, in a class by itself.

Non-Catholic Religious Activities. — The Federal Council of Churches issued an appeal, November 7, to thousands of congregations throughout the nation to dedicate their observance of Armistice Day to the cause of peace. Specific objectives of the program suggested by the council include the limiting of preparedness programs "to the defense of the continental United States," the calling of an economic conference for the "peaceful modification of the control of raw materials and markets," international control of the arms traffic and careful study of the issues to be discussed at the impending Pan-American Conference of Buenos Aires. * * * With over half the conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Protestant Church reporting favorably so far, the proposed plan of union of the Methodist churches in this country seemed certain of adoption. The conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, will not vote until 1938. So far only 204 of the 6,000 ministers and 46 of the 4,000 laymen voting have decided in the negative. * * * The News Service of the National Conference of Jews and Christians reports that greeting card manufacturers have announced that Christmas cards expressing religious sentiments will be in greater evidence this year. * * * A nation-wide drive on behalf of German Christian refugees was launched in Protestant churches November 15. In New York a city-wide interchurch conference was scheduled for November 22 with 1,500 ministers from the five boroughs invited. * * * Because of the prospect that the pariahs in India will abandon Hinduism and join a new religious faith, the Moslems of Egypt are experiencing a revival of missionary fervor. Teachers "who are well informed and able to set forth Islam in the light of modern ideas and modern experience" are particularly in demand for an impending Egyptian mission to India.

Richard Reid.—On November 8, the Laetare Medal for 1936 was conferred by the University of Notre Dame upon Richard Reid, publicity director of the Catholic Laymen's Association of Georgia and editor of the *Bulletin*. The Very Reverend John F. O'Hara, C.S.C., president of the university, delivered the citation: "Notre Dame selects you, Richard Reid, for your services in that army of enlightenment, the Catholic Laymen's Association of Georgia. You and your fellow workers began your pioneering in Catholic Action on the logical assumption that a more understanding spirit between Catholics and non-Catholics of your state should mean a more united front against the enemies of both." The president of the Catholic Press Association wrote a history of Mr. Reid's career that led to the present honor: "Mr. Reid went to Georgia in 1919 to become publicity director of the Georgia Catholic Laymen's Association, after he had received his Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees from Holy Cross College, Worcester, Mass., and his law degree from Fordham University, both Jesuit institutions. . . . 'Dick' Reid soon joined the Georgia Press Association. When these newspapermen began asking Dick about the teachings of the Church he explained them clearly and comprehensively. The columns of the Georgia papers were thrown open to him. His services were sought in turn as an editor by both the Augusta *Chronicle* and the Augusta *News*. Mr. Reid's reputation as a speaker was circulated through Georgia. Then other states began to hear of his oratorical ability. Mr. Reid was asked to join organizations promoting friendly relations between Catholics and non-Catholics. He joined them. Civic organizations in Georgia sought him as a member."

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A Cardinal's Project.—Since his pastoral letter of Christmas, 1931, His Eminence Cardinal Verdier, Archbishop of Paris, has brought about the construction of 100 new churches in the French capital and its immediate suburbs. Five years ago in certain districts the population had grown so rapidly that church facilities were completely inadequate. In some instances parishioners lived more than a mile from the nearest church. All in all there were less than 200 churches in a city of 5,000,000 souls. By the end of 1934 the work of supplying adequate facilities in the city's most populous districts was finished and 60 new churches had been completed. Since then the work of providing for the more remote districts has been in progress. Cardinal Verdier's letter had said in part, "A man is so justly proud, so great, so happy when he can give those he loves the fruit of his own labor because he is thereby giving them a little of himself. However beautiful charity is, he who accepts it enjoys neither happiness nor legitimate pride. By giving work we are leading our brother to the divine law: 'You shall earn your daily bread by the sweat of your brow.' And it is precisely in order to give our dear workingmen remunerative work that we have drawn up a project which would perhaps be rash if we did not count on the well-known generosity of our dear people and the desire that we all have to struggle against unemployment. If the best solution of the depression that causes us so much anxiety is to assure work and wages to our workers, let us give our charity this wise direction." During a large part of the intervening period 5,000 families have been supported by these wages and nearly 1,300,000 days of work have been provided. The Church now exerts considerably greater influence in the crowded workers' districts and a number of the French hierarchy have successfully embarked on similar programs.

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The Play and Screen

Plumes in the Dust

WHAT skilful acting, sensitive direction and attractive settings can do for a play is done for Sophie Treadwell's evocation of the life of Edgar Allen Poe. Henry Hull, facially a veritable re-creation of the poet, gives a vivid, poignant portrayal, a performance mingled of tenderness, spiritual suffering and tortured nerves; the finest performance of his career. His associates are in the main well chosen and in the period, Arthur Hopkins's direction is Arthur Hopkins at his best, and Woodman Thompson's settings are beautifully designed. In addition Miss Treadwell's play is an earnest endeavor to give a true picture of Poe; his love for his dead mother, for his child wife, his hatred of mediocrity, his craving for drink, and his almost total lack of harmony with his age. In its synthesis it gives a true external picture of the neurasthenic poet, and the details of the play are well chosen. Yet somehow the play misses fire. Poe's was not externally a dramatic or a vivid life; it was his internal, even his subliminal spirit from which sprung the dark flower of his genius. It is impossible to express this quality by the methods of the traditional biographical play, and this is what Miss Treadwell's play is. And perhaps no drama, other than a closet one, could express the essence of what must be expressed. Poe's genius was the genius of revery, and revery can never be the informing spirit of the acting stage. (At the Forty-sixth Street Theatre.)

Green Waters

MAX CATO, the author of this play about a family on the coast of Scotland, has a sense of character and an ability to write vital, poetic dialogue, but the somber abnormality of its chief protagonist, a young man who hates his father because he is illegitimate, is impossible to sympathize with, and the result is that the ensuing tragedy is altogether too unrelievedly horrible to be borne. The fact that the Frasers are Catholics has also nothing to do with the drama, for all concerned, or almost all, are surely dour Calvinists at heart. The play is admirably produced by Reginald Bach and Milton Shubert, with some excellent actors including Denis O'Dea, Reginald Bach, Doris Dalton, Terence Neill, Dennis Hoey, Ralph Cullinan and Jackie Jordon. Yet the only ones of these who are in the mood allotted to them are Mr. Hoey, Mr. Cullinan and Mr. Neill. A word, however, should be said for Jackie Jordon who, though he does not suggest a boy brought up on the bare coast of Western Scotland, is a youngster who may well become a second Freddie Bartholomew. (At the Masque Theatre.)

Black Limelight

THIS is another of those plays about pathological murderers which England seems to furnish recently. Gordon Sherry is the author of this one, and the first half of it is as exciting as you could wish. It tapers off somewhat at the end, but those who like thrills will find them. Moreover Mr. Sherry knows how to write biting poignant dialogue, and how to draw real characters. There is not a person in "Black Limelight" who is a stencil. The play deals with the search by the police for the murderer of a young girl, and the flight of Peter Charrington whom they suspect. Naomi, Peter's wife, is tortured by the suspicion that her husband is the murderer, and the story of how she discovers that he is innocent is the backbone of the drama. The play is admirably acted, and Winifred Lenihan as the wife gives one of the most touching and poignant performances seen so far this season. Miss Lenihan has been too long absent from the New York stage. Other excellent characterizations are those of George Curzon as Naomi's lawyer-friend, of Alexander Kirkland as Peter, of Brenda Forbes as a servant, and of a young actress named Kate Warriner as Lily James, the girl who is murdered. "Black Limelight" may not be the best of the pathological murder plays, but despite an occasional let-up in interest it will do for most murder-drama fans. A few of the lines in the scene in the cottage might, however, be omitted. They are needlessly frank. (At the Mansfield Theatre.)

GRENVILLE VERNON.

The Big Broadcast of 1937

THE TITLE most appropriately explains the intent of this periodical rounding up of "big names" of radio, stage and screen for a grand splurge in expensive musical-show production. The back-stage theme that formerly served as the vehicle for parading a host of singers, dancers and funmakers now is supplanted by a story of behind-the-mike radio routine. In this case, as with the predecessors, the manuscript itself is inconsequential to the lavishly staged action, which, in the form of songs, dances, specialties and gaggings, is injected episodically. There is an entertaining atmosphere of gaiety and peppiness flowing from the good music, clever dialogue and abundant light comedy—of its type. The big surprise, however, is the performance of Leopold Stokowski—he of the magic hands—and the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra, playing a magnificent symphony, in a mixture of Jack Benny, Burns and Allen and a crew of Benny Goodman swing-time horn tooters.

East Meets West

THE PRODUCERS evidently set out to pattern a plot of intrigue and romance in international politics against a semi-oriental atmosphere in order to fit George Arliss in the type of rôle which established him as one of the screen's leading actors ("Green Goddess," et al). The results sadly lack success, chiefly because of shabby story, overdramatization and unpolished direction. We doubt if even Mr. Arliss was deeply impressed as he set about to express his rare talents in the portrayal of the suave, oriental potentate who, having a harbor desired by both England and an unnamed East Indian power, plays one against the other in order to secure financial aid for his own country. The Rajah's son on the side engages in a piece of wife-stealing.

JAMES P. CUNNINGHAM.

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Communications

THE AAA

Cincinnati, Ohio.

TO the Editor: In his article, "In Defense of Farm Aid" (THE COMMONWEAL, August 21, 1936), Father Charles Owen Rice says he takes my article on "The Immorality of AAA" (THE COMMONWEAL, January 24, 1936) as a "jumping-off place for discussion." He then proceeds to jump off into so many generalizations, unprovable assertions, jumped conclusions and other logical errors that it would take many pages to point them all out and refute them. But I desire to touch on his assertions that I had one thing wrong, and three others mixed, which he implies damages beyond repair my thesis that the AAA taxes and benefits are inherently and fundamentally immoral.

He says the thing I had wrong "is nothing less than the nature of farming. Farming is not merely a business but is also a way of life." Then he says other pretty things about that way of life without telling just what it is. But his emphasis of it leads me to ask just how in actual reality a farming corporation pursues farming "not as a mere business but as a way of life." I suggest that he use as a concrete example the biggest beneficiary of AAA, that Florida sugar company which received over $1,000,000 in AAA payments. Some people might be glad to buy stock in farming corporations which can get big benefits from AAA for leading a way of life as well as merely engaging in business.

If he wants to base a defense of AAA on that phrase "a way of life" I ask Father Rice to define his term, and then to prove that it gives the governing power a moral right to burden the poorer people in both city and country, by a tax levied to pay benefits to farm landowners who are relatively much better off than those on whom the tax finally falls.

Father Rice gives several other reasons why "farms must be helped," all of which he seems to apply to all farms, but none of which would withstand analysis as they were written. But nowhere, in this part of his paper, or anywhere else, does he set up a single moral principle to controvert my thesis that AAA was, and I think still is, an immoral looting scheme. I quote in full all that Father Rice says about the three things I mixed up. Here again he fails to elucidate my error, merely stating that I made it. But that is not so important as the fact that it sets up his own thesis on which he bases his defense and panegyric of AAA. Of these three things he says:

"They are three major defects of the American economic *status quo*, and they constitute three problems which must be solved. They are: first, the maldistribution of industrial wealth and income; second, the maldistribution of agricultural wealth and income; third, the maldistribution of national income between industry and agriculture.

"The AAA was concerned with the third problem, namely, how to even up income between farm and factory, and was not concerned with the first two problems, that is, how to even up income and wealth among all the people of both city and country. Any of the programs of farm aid which will take from the town and give to the farm is interested in solving problem number three, and should not be judged on its relation to problems one and two. The patent injustices to the proletariat of the town and to the tenant farmer and worker of the country which arose from the application of the AAA are traceable to unsolved problems one and two. Obviously these injustices cannot fairly be blamed on the AAA. If in the equalizing of agricultural and industrial income the propertyless dwellers in the city find their troubles aggravated, that is unfortunate, but it is not the fault of the equalizing force, it is the fault of the general economic set-up. For the economic set-up, finance capitalism, has concentrated wealth and income in the hands of the few."

Friar Tuck might have offered just about the same defense for Robin Hood's little equalizations of wealth, and even more plausibly, because Robin looted the rich and shared the loot with the poor. But Father Rice offers not a word of morals in refutation of my thesis. He excuses AAA as a good thing, which could not be blamed for any injustices that arose from it. It amounts to transferring blame for the use of evil means because the end in view is deemed to be good, which is not generally considered to be good morals.

Father Rice deals in reality only long enough to admit that "patent" injustices to the poor arose from the application of AAA, but he hastens into an obfuscated attempt to absolve AAA of all blame for its own acts. He finally lands this blame, in some esoteric fashion, which is not disclosed, on "finance capitalism" because it "has concentrated wealth and income in the hands of the few."

He overlooks the fact that AAA did some sweet jobs of concentrating wealth itself, as the Florida sugar company and many others bear evidence. It is an obvious fact that before AAA there was no looting by government of the sort that AAA established. Instead of connecting obvious cause and effect, Father Rice recognizes the effect of injustice arising out of the application of AAA but would set the cause out in the obscurity of generalization. But the injustice of AAA was precisely the nub of the thesis Father Rice says is weak. I submit that it is neither good logic nor good morals to get rid of it in that fashion.

Having declared AAA to have no stain of sin, Father Rice then commends the "reasonable success" it achieved in solving his problem number three, the correction of maldistribution of national income as between industry and agriculture. Here again he doth protest too much, and the facts belie him. For even he admits that many of those who suffered from the injustices of AAA were farm tenants and workers. Wherefore some of their income was a redistribution within agriculture itself. Of course the redistributed income of city workers was mostly that of the poorer elements. The beneficiaries did not comprise all the owners of farm lands. So Father Rice again takes in too much territory when he considers AAA to have solved his third problem.

What he commends for its "reasonable success" was no such equalization as he visions between two economic

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groups bound in morals to make such a transfer. It was an actual looting, mostly of people who were the poorer parts of both groups, and a transfer of that loot, less AAA's cut, to some of the better-to-do in agriculture. If that is "equalizing incomes between industry and agriculture," then logic as taught in Catholic seminaries and colleges is all bunk.

Instead of a "reasonable success" as a solver of Father Rice's alleged problem number three, AAA is a rank failure in that respect. But it is more than a "reasonable" success, it is one that passes the bounds of reason—as a scheme for legalistic looting. Apparently its greatest success is in building up a political machine.

ERNEST F. DUBRUL.

CATHOLIC STUDENTS' CLUBS

Salt Lake City, Utah.

TO the Editor: Newman clubs and study clubs organized in Catholic colleges and universities are, or should be, meeting regularly. Newman clubs, designed to assist Catholic students enrolled in non-Catholic institutions of higher learning; study clubs, designed to further inculcate particular knowledge of religion and the messages contained in the social encyclicals of the Popes.

In past years, there has not been enough emphasis placed on the vital need of extending these beneficial club activities beyond the confines of each particular club. All college students, whether attending Catholic or non-Catholic schools, have been guilty, in some degree, of being esoteric and confined in the Newman and study club work.

It is and has long been painfully evident that the majority of club members exhibit marked lukewarmness. Their interest in any phase of the club's program is little more than nil. Long study and consideration have been given to this problem, which is encountered in a greater or less degree in all clubs, by those in directive positions. Notwithstanding, the problem yet looms up as large and apparently insoluble as ever. It is also evident that most, if not all, club members think no more about the purpose for which the club meets each week or so, when the door of the club room has been closed behind them. But in this case, long study and consideration have not been given to a problem that is far more important than the first, and one that can be much more easily solved.

There are those undergraduates, of course, who are vitally interested in the work of the club, and who make a sincere effort to influence their fellow students and friends on the outside. But unfortunately this number is shockingly small.

This same failure to make an effort to influence those without the club can be observed in an advanced form among the alumni who were formerly members of these clubs. Indeed, here the condition is ever so much worse because the alumni even goes so far as to completely sever connections with the clubs.

In these trying days when militant Catholic Action becomes so increasingly necessary, an effort should be made to bring Catholic students and alumni to a realization of the fact that there is much more to these clubs than their names.

The Newman clubs will always have to function under a peculiar handicap because they draw membership from all Catholic students in non-Catholic institutions of higher learning. This, perforce, means that the program of Catholic Action will have to be of a general nature. One that will appeal to at least the greatest number of students, if not to all of them. The Newman club directors have to reckon with the unpleasant fact that Catholic students are not immune to indifference and indolence simply because they are Catholics. This will undoubtedly add to the difficulty of convincing the members that their work, like the work of the Church, must go on through life. However large the obstacles, students and alumni must somehow be made to understand that they should make the club's influence felt beyond the four walls of the club rooms. The very motto of the Newman clubs, *Cor ad cor loquitur* (Heart speaketh unto heart), includes all hearts and not merely those of the club members.

In Catholic colleges and universities, where study clubs are organized for such a particular work of Catholic Action as the studying of the encyclical letters of the Popes, the task of educating the students to think in terms of social justice for the United States is not so difficult; but it is difficult enough. The students who participate in these study clubs usually have a certain amount of interest in the work at hand. Some no doubt are intensely interested. The directors of the study clubs will find it easier to get members to carry on the work of effecting social justice among their fellow students and friends.

Special attention should be given to the coordination of student and alumni activity in the study clubs. Machinery should be worked out that will make it possible for the graduates, who have been members of the study clubs, to remain in constant touch with these clubs. There should be a continual interchange of ideas and information between students and alumni. In this way the contagious enthusiasm of the younger students can be brought in direct contact with the graduates, who will be born anew, as it were. In like manner the refined knowledge and diversified experience of the graduates will be made available to the student club members.

The alumni members should ever widen the field of their particularized Catholic Action. Groups, patterned after the collegiate study clubs, should be organized so that no graduate's energies will be wasted for want of a proper channel into which they can be directed. A movement of nation-wide proportions can thus be set in motion, that will have as its end the actualization of social justice.

We must have extensive and intensive Catholic Action among Catholic students and alumni, if we would see again religion and justice restored to their rightful places in society.

PAUL SULLIVAN.

In the review of "George and Sarah Green," by Dorothy Wadsworth, it was said: "Professor De Selincourt has not edited it from the original manuscript." "Not" was a typographical error for "now."—T. C.

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Books

Autumn Days

Autumn in the Valley, by Mrs. Winthrop Chanler: Boston: Atlantic Monthly Press Book; Little, Brown and Company. $3.00.

THE TITLE of Mrs. Chanler's new volume of memoirs is fitting, not only because it deals with the years of maturity spent largely in the Genesee Valley, but also because it suggests the rich subdued glow of the "season of mists and mellow fruitfulness" which lies over its pages. A comparison of this second book with "Roman Spring" is inevitable. Both deal with "life, art, books, and people," especially people. Both reveal that Mrs. Chanler is catholic in more than her faith—notably in her friendships. In her autumn as in her spring, she has enjoyed intimacy with leading spirits in the fields of intellect and art. Yet she speaks with equal warmth of affection of her scapegrace brother-in-law, or of the fox-hunting set of the Valley: "I like riders and hard riders, not all, but most of them," although "horses and their doings become the topic of endless conversation, and few know how to make this amusing."

In commenting on the elasticity of spirit that knowledge of several languages brings, Mrs. Chanler recalls that "we have a different or an extra soul for every language that we know well." It would seem that she had a different soul or "soul-side" for each of the many aspects of her rich and varied life. She could share to the full her husband's enthusiasm for fox-hunting, although she quotes with zest the dictum of the Irish lad, "Sure if there were nae fools, there'd be sorra few fox hunters." She could be caught "in the meshes of social hedonism—in that cloud of complacency that makes the 'Vain Delights' so very pleasant while they last, and must make us look so foolish to the angels." Yet her account of the Aegean cruise, as Edith Wharton's guest, among the isles of Greece, and of her later wanderings in Egypt and Palestine reveal a rare and cultivated mind, exquisitely sensitive to the beauty and splendor of the glory that has departed. And she walks in all simplicity "the way where light dwelleth." Hers is a complete understanding and sympathy with those whose faith she had adopted in girlhood. Quoting Père Pie de Langogne's wise remark that "the English respected God so much that they did not love Him, and the Romans loved Him so much that they forgot to respect Him," she adds, "I like to think the Romans have chosen the better part."

The book is less autobiography than a series of sketches. The chapters on the war add nothing in the way of comment, original or profound, to the subject, and there is little in her husband's letters from the Front, which she quotes, to merit publication. But when the warriors and fox-hunters are forgotten, we shall remember what one writer calls "that circle of minds and hearts burning brilliantly, filling a fiery circle of other minds and hearts with warmth and light," and, above all, we shall remember the gracious woman who shares that charmed circle with the fascinated reader caught up in its spell.

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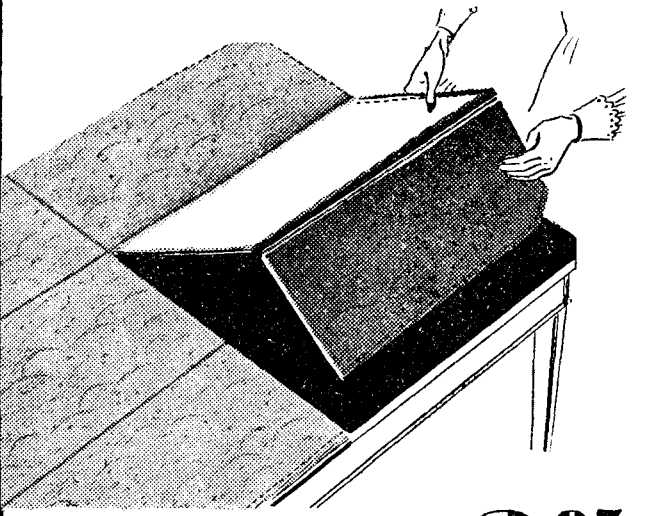

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Next Week

In THE PROMISE OF AMERICAN POLITICS, the eminent political scientist, Carl J. Friedrich, examines a book of that name written by Professor and State Senator T. V. Smith of Chicago, and goes on to reflect on corporatism and Fascism, community by craft and community by point of view, the rôle of the politician and certain wellsprings of happiness of interest to the State. To everyone interested in the promise of American politics or in brilliant and charming analysis, this article will be welcomed as very interesting indeed. . . . PAX ROMANA, by Francis Aylward, describes the work of the International Secretariate of Catholic Students and associations for peace called Pax Romana. "It exists for the mutual service of the national groups; it represents the Catholic university movement in meetings with other organizations; it promotes international cooperation, not by political means, but by its insistence on the essential unity of Christendom." It is something Commonweal readers will be happy to know about. . . . Dr. Goetz Briefs, who, in the German Ministry of Labor, was a member of the reform committee of the unemployment insurance act of 1930, sends us from Washington the first of two articles dealing with FACTS ABOUT SOCIAL INSURANCE. He shows that a social insurance system is integral to the individualistic system of industrialism, and not an alternate method of meeting certain human problems. "Social insurance is the premium we pay for preservation of the present order." Dr. Brief writes with experience and wisdom of the host of errors to be avoided in thought and action about social security, and gives a surprising number of enlightening observations on the nature of sociology and statesmanship. The article that will follow will deal with specific administrative and financial problems arising from such an act as America recently got. . . . AN AMERICAN MIRACLE, by Warren Ramsey, is a facinating and altogether out-of-the-ordinary characterization of an honest man. It might be classed as a conversion story, but that is really so inadequate that it is better to recognize that this sketch is not one of any class at all.

Mrs. Chanler's tribute to her friend, Justice Cardozo, might well be adopted—with but a change of pronoun—to express the reader's own sentiments on concluding the book: "He combines all his knowledge and alembicated wisdom with such pleasant wit and modest simplicity, he has so many interesting things to relate, that the good hour flies far too quickly and he leaves me always to my regret, and to boast to my friends that he has come."

LUCILE A. HARRINGTON.

Eternity and Connecticut

Angels' Mirth, by Ethel Cook Eliot. New York: Sheed and Ward. $2.00.

IT IS almost as though the theme of Mrs. Eliot's latest novel had been suggested by that loftiest flight of all human poetry, the last canto of the Paradiso, in which Saint Bernard asks the Blessed Virgin to obtain for Dante a glimpse of the Beatific Vision. To develop such a theme in modern terms, on a Connecticut countryplace, where Catholics, as in Mrs. Eliot's earlier novels, move among pagan sophisticates, all within the compass of a relatively brief novel, is a formidable task for any author to attempt.

Though the most purely mystical scene in the book, where Mary Stevens, while buying a newspaper in the Grand Central station, receives direct assurance of her dead sister's eternal life, is also the most successful, the novel is in some ways uneven. The plot lags for a while after the excellent opening chapter, the dialogue is often strained, and the boy Julius is hardly a convincing character. Yet the swift action of the story's latter half grips the reader and the psychology of the sixteen-year-old heroine is analyzed with extraordinary effectiveness.

The plot is a tragedy of divorce. Mary, deserted years before by her musical mother, is sent by her father to spend the summer with the fascinating and completely pagan Violet Sands, whose children, Irina and Julius, are as intense in their Catholicism as their father is now perfunctory. Indeed Henry Sands is behaving in a satisfactorily "civilized" way, staying in New York while his wife puts the finishing touches on her decision to divorce him and marry Mary's father.

The Sands children are as yet in ignorance of their mother's plan, but Mary does her pathetic best to be as "civilized" as the other pagans, and believes herself as happy as her desperate mourning for her recently dead little sister will allow. She is amazed to learn that otherwise intelligent people can still believe in "hell and holy water and the Virgin Mary." In her haunted hopelessness she demands that the Virgin to whom Irina prays should make her "swallow the truth about death," and then one day Irina's prayer for her is answered in an utterly unhoped for way. She *knows* that her sister lives with God. Mrs. Sands, threatened suddenly with death from cancer, dies in a carefully disguised suicide, and Mary's new-found happiness is almost destroyed in her horror at this rejection of life. As the book closes, Mary, groping her way toward the Faith, is trying to understand Irina's vocation to the death to this world of a Carmelite.

T. LAWRASON RIGGS.

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A Good Book Better

Boswell's Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson, LL.D.; edited by Frederick A. Pottle and Charles H. Bennett. New York: The Viking Press. $5.00.

LET NO man says that the old standard edition of Boswell's "Journal" is an insipid or mediocre book. It isn't. But the present edition, based on the manuscript in the Isham collection, is really a much better one. The number of delightful indiscretions is endless; and the amount of Boswellian reflection which has suddenly turned up is a proper theme for grace. Editorial notes of great judiciousness add to one's pleasure. I should say, to make an impossibly long story brief, that there has been made available a huge fund of pleasure. Lovers of Johnson really ought to compare at least some pages of the volume they already know with this. They will be surprised.

The charm of Boswell lies in his ability to humanize Johnson. He himself was torn between addiction to learning and virtue, and a hankering after more rudimentary pleasures. Perhaps it was this which enabled him to goad the eminent Doctor into comment. At any rate a man who could produce no end of such remarks as, "I'm not answerable for all the words in my dictionary" was a man born to be somebody's peerless biographer. He himself could see, hear and remember so vividly that life in Scotland during the eighteenth century is still something with which one can be perfectly familiar.

Of Johnson one says finally, "What a man!" The strangest thing about him possibly is that, for all his burrs and quirks, he remains one of the most consistent of mortals. An ancient habit of sound philosophizing had been bequeathed to him and he made the most of it. He could analyze a moral dictum or orate on bed sheets with equal facility, pertinence and respect for reality. One such person demonstrates the amiability and strength of a century.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

Rather Bewildered

Kit Brandon: A Portrait, by Sherwood Anderson. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

IT HAS been said before, but it always bears repeating: Sherwood Anderson is puzzled. Indeed, Mr. Anderson himself has been the person to say it most often, in some twenty books, written in a style which alternately reads like an illiterate man trying to be "literary" and a literary man trying to seem illiterate. That style began in the African consciousness of Miss Stein's Melanctha Herbert; through Mr. Anderson it poured like the torrents of spring over Mr. Hemingway, and on and on, over Messrs. Callaghan, Caldwell, Faulkner, Dahlberg, Farrell—all those whom one imagines burning the midnight oil as they roughen and make ungrammatical their prose. Since style and substance are not really separable, the verbal awkwardness of the *Untermensch* has brought with it his subhuman mentality; and fiction is everywhere filled with the groping and inarticulate, or the articulate only

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to be obscene. Or to be revolutionary, for the puzzlement begins to take direction and our young romantics turn their once inward-gazing eye toward Moscow. Tired of their lonely position, they identify themselves with the mass man, but retain their attitude of anti-respectability.

Mr. Anderson keeps up with his disciples. The Kit Brandon of his title is a girl from one of those poverty-stricken, filthy, incestuous hill-billy homes familiar in recent fiction. Kit, with good reason, leaves home, works in a cotton mill, gets in with bootleggers (much detail about bootlegging lends an historical air to the story), can afford the cars and fine clothes she has longed for, reads the *New Yorker,* but at last decides to "get into some sort of work that did not separate her from others." The reviewer is puzzled too: perhaps Kit represents America, up from slovenly beginnings, on to material luxuries, finally resolving to share with others—but what? The same material luxuries it would seem. The present volume, then, is one more addition to the *corpus* of Andersonian bewilderment, which is in no way nearer resolution because Mr. Anderson is aware we are economically in an evil pass. And it would seem that Mr. Anderson's bewilderment has just about as profound a cause as that of his character who wondered why God gave him a poison-ivy rash when he went to pick pansies for his sick mother.

GEOFFREY STONE.

Sonora's Missionary

Rim of Christendom, by Herbert Eugene Bolton. New York: The Macmillan Company. $5.00.

HERBERT EUGENE BOLTON puts a remarkable immediacy into his biography of Father Eusebio Kino, pioneer Jesuit missionary of Sonora and of our own Southwest. Professor Bolton followed the tracks of Kino's explorations all through the mountains and deserts and lovely valleys, and even made a point of seeing the sun rise and set at the times of day and from the angles that Father Eusebio did. Much of the book is a personal travel and exploration book as well as being the tale of the original explorer. The author writes with enthusiasm and interest which are transferred to the reader and make him a witness of the living frontier of the Faith and of civilization.

Father Kino was an amazing man: a good priest, a mathematician, astronomer, cartographer (some of his maps reproduced add greatly to the volume), explorer, ranchman, cattle king, defender of the frontier, chronicler, optimist and tireless generator of energies. Professor Bolton has found and mastered an enormous quantity of material on his life and on New Spain around the beginning of the eighteenth century. The book is bulging with material; not dry, "scholarly" impedimenta, but human adventure and historical re-creation. Perhaps before the end Kino has taken one or two too many trips toward the head of the Gulf of California, but he never quite repeated himself, and the biographer and the historian of the Southwest must show the innumerable places where he visited; how he had "fine talks," and Christianized and civilized.

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"Rim of Christendom" is not a history book. It is an energetic biography. From it may be taken an almost indefinite number of history lessons. The tone, flavor and spirit of Spanish imperialism is remarkably well presented. It is an expanding, pre-secularized kingdom, a remarkable organism to have existed so close to our home and day. New Spain was close to an antithesis of New England in its whole character and purposes and impress on the natives and land. Professor Bolton does not hide the lack in Sonora of many good things found in the northern colonies, but with contagious enthusiasm he depicts the virtues present in the Spanish mission land which were not even conceivable between the Rio Grande and Canada.

The history does not at all deal with the immediate problems of today, but it projects an historical period and makes a reader think about and appreciate more things and ideas, and is an antidote to the general run of propaganda histories read in this country. As Americana which describes the discovery and naming and settlement of American places, it deserves a place right up at the top.

PHILIP BURNHAM.

Politics and Love

Death of a Man, by Kay Boyle. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.50.

MISS KAY BOYLE has gained a deserved reputation for the quality of her prose style. Brilliant, decorative and sensitive, it is admirably suited to the material which she takes in hand for this novel, an interesting romantic work The story may be called a high political romance.

When Dr. Prochaska meets Pendennis and her husband during the court of a Sunday's ski-outing in the Tyrol, it is plain that medicine and politics will be challenged by another interest. Whether romantic love will merely supplement or definitely supplant the other two devotions of the doctor's life is the problem that the action immediately raises, to be solved in the conclusion of a subtle and very finished narrative. The title of the book is half a hint of the conclusion; if a man dies, it is because a politician is born. For the stars that move over this picturesque Tyrolean land and lead its people into pitiful disorder are Dollfuss and Hitler.

The book is memorable rather for its picture of political acrimony than for its story. Miss Boyle, of course, can create and has created life-like characters, and the action they pursue is at least plausible. What they do, however, has the arbitrariness of the behavior of wilful children, and is not artistically or philosophically inevitable and therefore is the less human in the whole sense of the word. The fault, it seems to me, lies not so much in Miss Boyle's approach to politics in the novel—though that is not quite convincing. The fault lies in the conception of Pendennis's character: she is rootless, which is necessary to the fiction, but also she is fundamentally inane; the doctor never confronted a real dilemma.

ANDREW CORRY.

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Random Notes

Three Worlds, by Carl Van Doren. New York: Harper and Brothers. $3.00.

MR. VAN DOREN does not reveal what prompted him to write this pretentiously titled book, labeled as personal memoirs. Its justification, therefore, remains open to question. For seemingly he has reached a stage where boredom with self threatens to become chronic. This is not a happy attitude for one who approaches a book whose subject-matter demands provocative treatment. "Three Worlds" is weary writing. It lacks the advantage of an integrating plan and consequently there results a mass of incomplete personal history, anecdotes, questions from the author's own previously published work, a few letters, certain inconclusive philosophizing, and encomiums for some of his own literary associates. His observations of three eras—pre-war, post-war and depression—are casual without the leaven of profundity.

Benedictine Wisdom

Saint Benoit Nous Parle, by Dom Paul Chauvin. Paris: Bloud et Gay. 20 francs.

THIS is a book of spiritual conferences by the Prior of Ste.Marie, Paris. They are based upon the Rule of St. Benedict and are intended primarily for Benedictine Oblates. For this particular class, no doubt, they have a special value. But for the general reader, Abbot Butler's "Benedictine Monachism" would seem to be much more interesting. However, the title, "St. Benedict Speaks to Us," suggests the possibility of a very different treatment, avoiding comparison with such outstanding spiritual books as the "Introduction to a Devout Life," by Saint Francis de Sales. Saint Benedict lived when the Roman Empire was decaying from causes finding to some extent a counterpart in our own civilization. How Saint Benedict met the challenge of his time, and the lessons for ourselves, might form a fascinating and profitable study. The challenge for the Benedictines of today is to save our civilization, instead of, like their spiritual ancestors, cherishing fragments of the wreckage and slowly building anew. May Saint Benedict speak to us in a book that tells us how this can be done!

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